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THE  
DISCUSSION

BETWEEN

REV. JOEL PARKER, AND REV. A. ROOD,

ON THE QUESTION

*“WHAT ARE THE EVILS INSEPARABLE  
FROM SLAVERY,”*

WHICH WAS REFERRED TO BY MRS. STOWE, IN

“UNCLE TOM’S CABIN.”

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Reprinted from the Philadelphia Christian Observer of 1846.

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## Introduction.

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It is proposed in the publication of this pamphlet to afford the public an opportunity of judging of the merits of the unhappy controversy which has grown out of a paragraph from the pen of the Rev. JOEL PARKER, D.D., and referred to by Mrs. Stowe on page 191 of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The facts, concisely stated, are the following. In the autumn of 1846, the Rev. Mr. ROOD, in his weekly correspondence to the *New York Evangelist*, wrote an article reviewing the action of the Synod of Virginia on the subject of Slavery. The Synod saw fit to animadvert with some severity upon the resolutions passed by the General Assembly at their session in Philadelphia, May preceding, reprobating the system of Slavery, and urging all those connected with it to make prompt and strenuous efforts to "unbind the heavy burdens" and to secure liberty to "those who are bound." Mr. Rood, in a kind and temperate article, as will be seen by its perusal, defended the course of the General Assembly, and used the following language: "The mass of Northern Christians will sustain the *principles* embodied in the Declaration of the last Assembly on Slavery. On this subject there is not the slightest doubt, and it is but kindness and honesty to our

Southern brethren to say so." Dr. Parker, in view of this paragraph and some others which he regarded as exceptional, shortly after addressed a communication to Mr. Rood through the columns of the *Philadelphia Christian Observer*, with the caption, "The Philadelphia Correspondent of the *Evangelist* on the Synod of Virginia's resolutions on Slavery." This opened a discussion between these gentlemen which ran through a period of sixteen weeks. Dr. Parker took the signature, "O. R. Meridionus," and Mr. Rood, "The Correspondent of the N. Y. Evangelist." In Dr. Parker's second Number is found the famous paragraph which was copied in the public prints extensively in this country, and found its way to England, and everywhere was subjected to severe criticism and unsparing censure. The interpretation which Dr. Parker's respondent in the controversy put upon it will be abundantly apparent to every reader. It will not be denied too that Dr. Parker was fully aware that he was very extensively understood in that paragraph as uttering a sentiment which grieved and offended a great multitude of good people, and that he never took one step to modify or explain his statement till eight weeks after the publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The introduction of the paragraph embodied in Mrs. Stowe's work was in good faith, and without the slightest suspicion that they were not the *exact words* used by Dr. Parker in his controversy. *How, when, or where* the alteration was made, we have no means of ascertaining. That the public may understand the exact state of the case, we put in parallel columns the language quoted by Mrs. Stowe and the language really used by Dr. Parker.

## UNCLE TOM'S CABIN.

Slavery has "no evils but such as are inseparable from any other relation in social and domestic life."

## DR. PARKER.

"What, then, are the evils inseparable from Slavery? There is not one that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations."

It is due to Dr. PARKER to state that he claims that the language used by him is so modified and explained by its *connection* that it does not convey the sentiment which has been attributed to him. The correspondence now spread before the public will enable them to form a correct judgment on the merits of the case.

THE PUBLISHER.

NEW YORK, Nov. 9, 1852.





## Discussion on Slavery.

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[MR. ROOD TO THE NEW YORK EVANGELIST.]

### SYNOD OF VIRGINIA ON SLAVERY.

PHILADELPHIA, NOV. 23, 1846.

MR. EDITOR :—It is a coincidence that cannot fail to attract observation, and furnish matter of grave reflection, that the “friendly address from British Christians to the ministers and elders of the American Presbyterian Church, who bore a faithful testimony against slavery in the late General Assembly at Philadelphia,” should be spread before the public almost simultaneously with the “action of the Synod of Virginia,” in which the subject of slavery, as treated and disposed of by the General Assembly, is pronounced “wrong in *principle*, wrong in *measure*, and violent action upon a subject over-pressed.” In the “Address from British Christians,” it is said, “Ardently do we desire your encouragement in your praiseworthy career; most sincerely do we appreciate your Christian testimony to the essential sinfulness of slaveholding.” In another part, “We beseech you, dear brethren, to persevere in your righteous agitation, till the object be achieved. Cease not to expose the enormity of the crime of buying and selling a fellow-creature; of reducing a human being endued with an immortal soul, to the level of an ox or an ass. Stand fast by that clause of your declaration which asserts that Ame-

rican slavery is intrinsically an unrighteous and oppressive system, opposed to the prescriptions of the law of God, to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, and to the best interests of humanity."

In the action of the Synod of Virginia, it is said, "We are sorry to be compelled to say, that in our judgment no spirit of our day bears the *stamp of fanaticism* more broad and deep, than does the *abolitionism* of our times." In another part, "In our judgment, our abolition brethren should forthwith abandon their violent and dictatorial bearing. They possess no moral right to teach us. They have no moral power to carry out their counsels. The efforts of the abolitionist will but blind and beat back the mind he seeks to instruct and advance."

These paragraphs sufficiently indicate the whole tenor and spirit of the document sent forth by the Synod of Virginia. The fact that the late action of the General Assembly was the thing aimed at by the Synod, indicates, beyond mistake, their meaning of the term "abolitionism." It is the testimony borne against slavery as "an unrighteous and oppressive system," against which they publish their protest. They say, "though much disputed, various expressions in the resolutions of the Assembly clearly indicate the doctrine of the essential sinfulness of the relation of master and servant, while the general bearing of the resolutions as clearly establishes this interpretation." The question is thus pressed to an issue, not whether the great body of Christians at the North sanction the violent measures and vituperative denunciations of a few, who are represented as saying, "We have exhausted the argument with the slaveholder, and must now try the virtue of *cold steel*!" On this point there can be no mistake. Our Southern brethren must know that the great mass of Christians in the non-slaveholding States give no countenance to the mad projects of a few who would "call down fire from heaven" upon those who will not submit to their dicta-

tion. Identity with them is not the question forced upon us by the action of the Synod of Virginia. But it is this—whether the mass of Northern Christians will sustain the *principles* embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly on the subject of slavery. On this point there is not the slightest doubt, and it is but kindness and honesty to our Southern brethren explicitly to say so. The Assembly would jeopard its existence if it should take one retrograde step. They will never say less than that American slavery is “opposed to the prescriptions of the law of God, to the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, and to the best interests of humanity.”

Deeply do I regret the action of the Synod of Virginia. I fear its stupefying influence upon the conscience of slaveholders. A body of Christian ministers and elders ought not, by *implication*, to throw their influence into the scale of oppression. I know they intended no such thing, but their earnest remonstrance against the action of the Assembly will, I fear, have this effect. Those who are determined to maintain the system of slavery will be encouraged in their efforts by what they will claim to be the support of our good brethren of the Synod of Virginia. Apart from the raving of mad fanatics, there is a deep and growing conviction of the unutterable abominations of slavery, and an increasing determination not to rest until this foul blot is wiped away from the church, and a jubilee is proclaimed throughout the land. These are the views, the feelings, and the purposes of a great majority of the wisest and best men in the non-slaveholding States. Our brethren at the South ought to be apprised of this *as settled, unchanging truth*.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yours,

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[DR. PARKER'S FIRST LETTER.]

*THE PHILADELPHIA CORRESPONDENT OF "THE EVANGELIST" ON THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA'S RESOLUTIONS ON SLAVERY.*

MR. EDITOR:—The correspondent referred to at the head of this article, has assumed to speak for "the mass of Northern Christians on the subject of slavery." He says that they "will sustain the *principles* embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly on the subject of slavery. On this subject there is not the slightest doubt, and it is but kindness and honesty to our Southern brethren to say so." Has the Philadelphia correspondent counted the cost of such a declaration as this?

By the *principles* referred to, I understand him to mean *all the* principles embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly. If he says that all he means to allege is that Northern Christians will be content to see a resolution passed declaring that "American slavery is opposed to the prescriptions of the law of God, to the spirit and precepts of the gospel, and to the best interests of humanity," for one, I shall not dispute him. But why are they content with this? Because nothing more is meant by this wordy sentence, than to declare that slavery, as a political institute, is a bad thing, and that Christianity tends to induce a better state of society than can consist with slavery. The greater portion of thinking minds will cheerfully admit this and more too. The gospel will probably one day introduce such political and social

arrangements into existence, as would cause us to look on every government now existing, as dark and sinful—as very far gone from original righteousness. But the correspondent means more than this. He quotes from the paper issued by the Synod of Virginia, the clause in which they say, “Though much disputed, various expressions in the resolutions of the Assembly clearly indicate the doctrine of the essential sinfulness of the relation of master and servant, while the general bearing of the resolution as clearly establishes this interpretation.” From the connection in which the correspondent has quoted this, and from the part which he has quoted in the language of the Assembly itself, it is evident that he means to assert that the mass of Northern Christians will sustain *this censure on slave-holding as being in itself a sin*. There is an expression in the Assembly’s document which implies that the holding of a slave is a sin. It is this. “We would not undertake to determine *the degree of moral turpitude* on the part of individuals involved by it,” (slavery.)

This language implies that the Assembly has judged every man who holds a slave as being *thereby* rendered culpable. So the Synod of Virginia understand this expression in connection with the statement quoted by the correspondent of the *Evangelist*, and cited above.

The fact is, the Assembly both *maintains* and *denies* that slavery is a sin in itself. In the passages above referred to, if taken together, it maintains it. In the following passages it denies it. They say, “We cannot pronounce a judgment of general and promiscuous condemnation, implying that destitution of Christian principle and feeling which should

exclude from the table of the Lord, all who stand in the legal relation of masters to slaves; or justify us in withholding our ecclesiastical and Christian fellowship from them." Again, "We have no right to institute and prescribe tests of Christian character and church membership, *not* recognized and sanctioned in the sacred Scriptures, and in our standards," &c. This language plainly implies that the Scriptures and our standards do not treat the holding of slaves as a sin. Allow me, through your columns, to ask the correspondent of the *Evangelist* one or two plain questions:—

1. Do you assert that the great mass of Northern Christians hold that it is a sin for a man to own a slave? Please take notice that my question is not, whether it be a sin to *abuse* a slave. On that point, you well know that there is no difference between yourself and your Southern brethren. Nor is it a question whether a master is bound benevolently to seek the good of his poor slave, as truly as it is your duty to seek the good of your poor neighbor. But do Northern Christians hold, that it is a sin for a man to own a slave?

2. Dare you, or any of your brethren, who agree with you, in the city of Philadelphia, maintain in the presence of "the mass of Northern Christians" in your own churches, that "*the owning of a slave is a sin*"? I am sure you dare not. You can talk about "the abominations of slavery"—"that horrible system," &c., &c., because you know full well that no Christian people, North or South, love slavery. But "the great mass of Northern Christians" believe that our Southern brethren are unjustly censured, that while men like the correspondent of the *Evan-*

*gelist*, do not descend to the billingsgate abuse of Garrison, they cautiously and gently insinuate the *same* doctrines, thus condemning the righteous and justifying the wicked. I assert, then, without the least fear of contradiction by "the great mass of Northern Christians," that while they would be glad, almost as glad as their Southern brethren, to see slavery removed from our land, yet they "will [*not*] sustain the principles embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly," *so far as those principles teach that the holding of a slave is a sin*, "and it is but kindness and honesty to our Southern brethren to say so."

I am, Mr. Editor, your obedient servant,

O. R. MERIDIÖNUS.



[MR. ROOD'S REPLY.]

REPLY TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR,—The communication of your correspondent fell under my observation in good time. I need make no apology in furnishing a reply. I had a perfect right to review "the action of the Synod of Virginia, on the subject of slavery," and "Meridionus" had an equally perfect right to pen his strictures, which you have published. I am a strong advocate of the doctrine of free discussion; and if I am unable to maintain my positions, I have no foolish pride in abandoning them.

I said in my letter to the *Evangelist*, "the mass of Northern Christians will sustain the *principles* embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly on slavery. On this subject there is not the slightest doubt; and it is but kindness and honesty to our Southern brethren to say so." "Meridionus" asks, "Has the Philadelphia correspondent counted the cost of such a declaration as this?" This much I can say, that nothing has as yet appeared, which induces a suspicion of the correctness of the sentiment I advanced. I do not say that the mass of Northern Christians will sustain the doctrine which "Meridionus" *claims* is taught in the action of the Assembly, to wit: that "*slave-holding is itself necessarily a sin.*" He travels beyond the record, and draws unwarranted inferences, and then endeavors to hold me responsible for the creations of his own fancy. Hence, he says,



“the great mass of Northern Christians believe that our Southern brethren are unjustly censured—that while men like the correspondent of the *Evangelist* do not descend to the billingsgate abuse of Garrison, they cautiously and gently insinuate the *same* doctrines ; thus condemning the righteous, and justifying the wicked.” I trust I shall be able to show, that this is quite gratuitous, and without any just foundation. Can nothing be said in opposition to slavery, without incurring the charge of fanaticism, and joining hands with reckless men, who glory most when they are most abusive and denunciatory? Is there no conservative ground on which the opposers of slavery can stand, and fearlessly exhibit its enormities? Are Wilberforce and Clarkson to be identified with George Thompson, in England ; or Dr. Hawes and Mr. Barnes to be charged with the indiscretions and sins of Wm. L. Garrison, in this country? Cannot men of prudence and piety bear their testimony against slavery, without being held responsible for the fierce denunciations of those to whom they give no countenance, and with whom they have no fellowship? There is a foundation on which all good men can stand, in their war against slavery, that is entirely exempt from the charge of fanaticism, and proscription, and denunciation. These are not the weapons which my views of the teaching and the spirit of the gospel lead me to select. And yet, according to your correspondent, my principles would place me in the same category with men who are distinguished chiefly for the use of vile epithets and billingsgate abuse. I protest against a representation so unfounded and unjust.

I plant myself on the broad position of the General

Assembly, that the system of slavery as it exists in this country, "is opposed to the prescriptions of the law of God, to the spirit and precepts of the gospel, and to the best interests of humanity." By the system of slavery, I mean an assemblage of things pertaining to it, adjusted into a regular whole—or the whole plan or scheme of human servitude, consisting of many parts, and connected in such a manner, as to create a chain of mutual dependencies. The working of this system is proved, by an experience of more than half a century, to be fraught with the most disastrous consequences—socially, politically, and morally. If a tree is known by its fruits, it is quite certain that this is a deadly Upas, sending forth putrid and poisonous exhalations in every direction. All good men ought to unite in "hewing it down, and casting it into the fire."

But are there not good men so environed with the difficulties which this system throws around them, that they cannot, *at once*, extricate themselves from its blighting influence? Are there not men, who hold the legal relation of masters, in conformity with the great law of love? I have no doubt of it; nor have I ever said any thing to the contrary. The General Assembly do not teach any doctrine at war with this sentiment. The representation of your correspondent, that the "Assembly both *maintains* and *denies* that slavery is a sin in itself," is entirely erroneous. Their action is consistent, and no mystification or special pleading can show it to be otherwise. They did, indeed, intend to discriminate between the *system*, and those Christian brethren who are, of necessity, involved in its evil workings, and deplore its bitter fruits, and are sincerely laboring and praying

for its subversion. In regard to these, they say in the spirit of kindness and benevolence which the gospel requires, "we cannot pronounce a judgment of general and promiscuous condemnation, implying that destitution of Christian principle and feeling which should exclude from the table of the Lord all who stand in the legal relation of masters to slaves ; or justify us in withholding our ecclesiastical and Christian fellowship from them." This is perfectly consistent with the declaration, that "American slavery is opposed to the prescriptions of the law of God, to the spirit and precepts of the gospel, and to the best interests of humanity." Good men are placed by it in circumstances of great difficulty and trial. But if they hold the system in righteous abhorrence, and labor in the best way they can for its subversion, I do not withhold from them Christian sympathy and fellowship. I have never advocated such a sentiment, nor "cautiously and gently insinuated doctrines which condemn the righteous and justify the wicked." The "one or two plain questions" of your correspondent are thus, I trust, answered to his satisfaction. If there are those who teach that "the holding of a slave is necessarily a sin," I am not of the number. And yet I have no doubt of the entire truth of my remark, on which your correspondent joins issue, that "the mass of Northern Christians will sustain the *principles* embodied in the declaration of the last Assembly, on the subject of slavery." Why should they not? Every new development of the system fastens the stamp of reprobation more deeply upon it. The more good men see of it, the more settled and determined is their opposition to it.

And then, we have occasional testimony from the South, confirming all our impressions of the mischief and misery induced by its prevalence. In a recent conversation with an intelligent educated gentleman from a slave-holding State, whose permanent residence is there, he said, (I give his exact language,) "The system of slavery is most unquestionably a leaden weight upon all the institutions of the South, political, civil, and religious. It is an incubus that broods over, and to no inconsiderable extent, paralyzes the energies of both Church and State, and in its domestic relations, it is a fearful evil." Testimony like this, it will be very difficult to invalidate, for it is given with a personal knowledge of the working of the system, and under strong motives to bear counter testimony.

I was amused at the adroitness of the remark of your correspondent, that the mass of Northern Christians would be glad, *almost as glad as their Southern brethren*, to see slavery removed from our land." I suppose he intended this as a playful, ironical suggestion, in view of what he regards the over-zealous efforts of some Northern Christians in relation to this subject. I am well aware that our Southern brethren are placed in exceedingly trying, embarrassing circumstances. But they are not relieved by such action as that taken by the Synod of Virginia. The aid proffered by your correspondent, does not meet the emergency of the case. The difficulty must be manfully met—not by checking and removing the evils which are said to be *incidental* to slavery, but by a resolute, united effort to *subvert* the system itself. The incidental evils are *part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it.*

I admit this is the appropriate business of our Southern brethren, and it was because, as it seemed to me, they were diverting themselves from the grand object which should engage their attention, and urging a false issue, that I ventured to pen my strictures, of which "Meridionus" complains.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

[DR. PARKER.]

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST  
AGAIN.

MR. EDITOR :—I am exceedingly gratified with the reply of the Correspondent of the *Evangelist* to my communication. I think any one who will read carefully his review of the action of the Synod of Virginia, on slavery, and my former strictures on that review, will clearly see that the Correspondent *did* convey the idea that “*slave-holding is itself necessarily a sin.*” But as he disclaims all *intention* of advancing such views, I am bound to receive his explanation. I thank him for so frank a statement of a truth of such fundamental consequence. In a more recent communication to the *Evangelist*, the correspondent says,—“The abstract doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful, ought never to have been broached. It is untrue, indefensible, and has done no good, but a vast amount of mischief.”

Let me say, then, to the “Correspondent,” I congratulate you, my dear Sir, for the bold stand you have taken for the truth. You will not maintain a false principle even to emancipate slaves. That is right. Truth is of more worth, than any thing that can be gained by its perversion. But let me assure you that you will be persecuted for this. You will be called “an apologist for slavery.” Still, I beg of you to go right on, and concede every thing that is true. If it *seems* to make against emancipation, still remember that truth is better than victory. Yield

nothing to the charge that you are the friend of oppression. Assert your own freedom, at least, as being worth using when God has given it to you. "If thou mayest be free, use it rather."

In the last part of your reply to me, you say that "The incidental evils [of slavery] are *part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it.*" Be so kind as to review this statement. I know that the assertion makes against slavery with tremendous power, *if it be true*. But, still, it is not worth maintaining, if it be *not true*. What are these incidental evils? They are things like these. Cruelty in punishing—insufficient provision of food and clothing—separating families by sale—neglect of instruction—disregard of marriage—and holding the relation for the purpose of gain to the master without any respect to the interests of the slaves.

Now how does it appear that these things are inseparable from slavery? Slaves are punished by their masters. Free blacks in Philadelphia are punished by the police. Take a thousand slaves in a district containing that number in Virginia, and a thousand free blacks in a district in Moyamensing, and which suffer the greatest amount of penal evil in a year? Look at both and then judge. Then, again, I ask, are there not a great many humane masters who *never abuse* their servants? What is to prevent others from doing the same thing?—Insufficient food and clothing. What can prevent improvement in this respect? Many years ago, it was usual in Louisiana to furnish slaves with a peck of corn a week. It was poor fare, scarcely superior to the fare of their ancestors in Africa, and their brethren there to-day; and not much better than the living of our



American Indians. Now, probably there is not a planter in Louisiana that does not furnish meat for his servants. What is to hinder further improvements till they shall live as well as the Pennsylvania farmers? Many do. It is in the power of masters to promote the comfort of their slaves, and every good man does it conscientiously.—And is separating families by a sale a *part and parcel of the thing that can never be separated from slavery?* But it is separated from it just in proportion as men are disposed to do their duty. A southern Christian no more thinks of selling a slave without his consent, than a northern Christian does of failing in business as a means of defrauding his creditors. Men that are wicked, do wickedly in both cases. But, besides all this, a change in the law itself is possible. Slavery has existed and does exist, where, while men have a right to *hold* slaves, they have no power to *sell* them. This is at least a *possible* amelioration of Southern slavery. The domestic slave-trade is not inseparable from slavery.—The disregard of the marriage relation is not inseparable from slavery. The laws, it is true, do not enforce matrimonial obligations, nor protect the rights of the married. But there is nothing to hinder the religious celebration of marriage and a religious inculcation of conjugal duties. The slaves of the South understand the relations and duties of husband and wife, and are more strongly influenced by marriage vows, and their purity is better protected than it was before they were in bondage among a civilized and Christian people. Thousands of families of slaves are entirely secure in the enjoyment of all the privileges of married persons, except there is a bare possibility that through the insolvency of a master



they may be separated in the settlement of his estate. Even, then, they will ordinarily be purchased by family friends and removed by whole families. Yet this evil is not inseparable, for the law may be modified.

Is neglect of instruction inseparable from slavery? Whole plantations are better taught, more thoroughly catechised in the elements of religious truth, than an equal number of hired servants, taking a street in course in the city of Philadelphia. Was not a man bought out of bondage, and all his family, in Alabama, a short time since, *because* he was a good Latin, Greek, and Hebrew scholar, and a well read theologian? Did not many Roman slaves become the teachers of youth, and even authors of works, whose classic beauties delight our Universities to-day? The truth is, slaves can be taught to an indefinite extent in all those things that are of most consequence to a degraded people. If the money that has been expended in embittering the South by an ill-timed and ill-natured and unjust censuring of honest men, had been employed in preaching the gospel in the Southern country, there would have been no complaint of the neglect of the instruction of slaves.—But is it *inseparable from slavery*, that men hold the relation for the purpose of gain to the master, without any respect to the interests of the slaves? You have yourself conceded that it is not. You “grant that some masters retain their slaves, *not for the sake* of pecuniary gain, but from motives of benevolence”—that “one man in a hundred or a thousand holds slaves in harmony with the great law of love.” Then, certainly, a *bad intention* is not *inseparable* from slavery—a *part and parcel of the thing itself*. Every Chris-

*tian* that holds a slave, holds him in harmony with the great law of love. If you take all the rulers, from Nimrod to Nicholas of Russia, that have governed without a written constitution, you will not find more than one in a hundred or a thousand, that have governed in harmony with the great law of love. Still the holding of absolute power is not sinful in *se*, nor has Christianity ever aimed at the subversion of a despotic throne, as its direct object. It has aimed to enlighten, raise, and purify the people, and left the improved mass of mind to assume a new political form, corresponding with its improved character.

If we had aimed directly to change the external structure of society in the Sandwich Islands, we should not have succeeded. True, the people were all enslaved. But their depravity, the intrinsic degradation of the race, had placed them there. They and their despotic masters were sinners together.

We began to act on individual character. Our Christianity has wrought a change in individual character. This change is naturally expressing itself in laws, and a written constitution, trial by jury, &c. &c.

What, then, are the evils that are inseparable from slavery? There is not one, that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations. It is possible for any other master to treat his slaves as well as Abraham did his. It is possible that a master and his slave may be both devout people. It is possible that the one may be as rich as Joseph of Arimathea and as devout, and the other may be as pious as Lazarus, and less poorly

provided for, though as helpless and as full of sores, and a slave.

Recollect, you have maintained that the subversion of the system is the *only* thing that can be done. Then, is it nothing to convert and save a poor slave? Is it nothing to instruct whole plantations in elementary religious truth? Is it nothing to secure the preaching of the gospel to the black population? But you say, "*The incidental evils are part and parcel of the thing itself, and can never be separated from it.*" What vice is there that cannot be repented of and abandoned—what virtue that cannot be cherished and cultivated, both by slaves and their masters? Not one. I am sure you will recall this position, for you love truth better than any wrong position, though it should *seem* to favor a good object.

Whether the Assembly's document has both *maintained* and *denied* that slavery is a sin in itself, I leave to any unprejudiced reader. If the intimation, that a "degree of moral turpitude" belongs to "the individuals involved" in slavery is not a maintaining that slavery is a sin in itself, then I confess I do not understand plain English. That it is denied afterwards, is equally clear.

I am sure, it is not obvious to me why you *were* amused with my saying, that the mass of Northern Christians would be glad, almost as glad as our Southern brethren, to see slavery removed from our land. I meant it certainly as a very serious statement; and whatever those may think of it, who fancy they have philanthropy to boast of, you, at least, are too modest a man, to claim that you feel anything like the degree of zeal for removing slavery, that the Rev. Mr. Stiles, of Richmond, the Rev. Dr. Hill, of

Winchester, and their associates, feel in the same work.

In conclusion, I have one word to say about "cautiously and gently insinuating the *same* doctrines." I think, that the maintaining that slavery is a sin in itself, which still appears to me to be implied in your statement in the first article, you *did* maintain the *same* doctrine—and if I understand the assertion, that "The incidental evils are *part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it,*" this is also the *same* doctrine. It is a maintaining that slavery is a complication of principles so combined, that no moral chemistry can decompose it, and every man that holds a bondman does, of necessity, while he holds him, inflict an enormous wrong. This, I think, is condemning the just. At any rate, it is so understood by Southern men.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.

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[MR. ROOD.]

*REJOINDER TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."*

MR. EDITOR:—I have a natural aversion to controversy of any sort. My disposition, training, and habits, make me shrink from a "war of words" with any class of men. Phrenologists tell me that the "bump of combativeness" is but feebly developed in my cranium. I think they must be right in that, however defective and erroneous their general theory may be.

In my review of the "action of the Synod of Virginia on slavery," I had not the slightest anticipation of calling into the field an antagonist of so much shrewdness and ability as "Meridionus" proves himself to be, nor indeed of provoking a reply from any source. But I have no reason to complain of the course of things thus far. If I must engage in controversy, give me for opponents such men as your correspondent, who well understands the proprieties of life, and is better pleased with hard arguments, than the calling of hard names. I am fairly in for a controversy, without suspecting it, and I shall sustain the positions I have taken, in the best way I can, till I am convinced they are erroneous, and indefensible by sound reasoning, and the precepts and principles of the incorruptible Word. Whenever this conviction shall be fastened on my mind, they will be abandoned without the slightest hesitation. I have no great respect for the intellect or the integrity

of a man who will maintain a position, which is *proved* to be untenable, simply because he has planted himself upon it. Truth is the only thing worth an effort to sustain and defend. If "Meridionus" has truth on his side, I can heartily say I wish him full success, and a triumphant issue in this correspondence. But if his reasoning is shrewd rather than sound—if he teaches error, the more dangerous on account of its plausibility; if he "gently and cautiously insinuates doctrines," which do violence to the fundamental principles of Christian benevolence, and nullify the golden rule laid down by our Savior, as universal in its obligation and application—then surely I do not wish him success, but better views on the subject of human rights.

I have no disposition to recall, or to *qualify* my remark, that "the abstract doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful, ought never to have been broached. It is untrue, indefensible, and has done no good, but a vast amount of mischief." If, as "Meridionus" thinks, I shall be persecuted for this, so be it. I will not hold what I regard as a mere dogma, for the sake of conciliating the good-will of any class of men, however wise they may think themselves to be. I have seen enough of certain self-styled reformers, not to feel any apprehension that wisdom will die with them. The world will stand, and its affairs be very judiciously conducted, when their light shall be put out. "Meridionus" well understands, that I care as little for the vituperative abuse of the class to whom he alludes, as he does himself. But I will not reject truth, because indiscreet and reckless men hold it. The cause of emancipation has been sadly retarded by the mad zeal of some, who have forced

themselves before the public as its prominent advocates. What, then? Shall the cause be abandoned, because it has fallen into unskillful, or, if you please, into unscrupulous hands? Ought not greater efforts to be made to separate truth from error, and to give it that prominence before the Christian community, which its intrinsic importance demands?

I come now to the main design of your correspondent, in his last communication. It is to subvert and prove untrue the following statement of mine, to wit, that "*the incidental evils of slavery, as they are called, are part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it.*" He says, "be so kind as to review this statement." I have done so, with all the caution and candor of which I am capable; but I still believe that the statement, as I intended it should be understood, is true, and can be successfully vindicated. I do not deny, that cruelty of treatment, where it exists, may be corrected. Those poorly clad and fed, may be comfortably supplied. There are *many* modifications of slavery induced by humanity and the promptings of Christian kindness, while the *thing itself* remains, in its withering, blighting power. There is slavery, whenever a human being, *without crime alleged*, is robbed of his inalienable rights, such as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." A Southern planter, some time since, made the following honest avowal. He was walking over his grounds with a friend, and when they came in sight of the huts occupied by his slaves, he stood for a brief space gazing at them in mute silence. His friend supposed he was planning some alterations or improvements. At length he said with deep emotion, "*I have no right to hold those human beings in*



*servitude. I know it, I feel it—but what can I do?*" The plan which I advocate, *the subversion of the system*, will aid such men, who are struggling with difficulties which they are unable to surmount. It will furnish them with an opportunity of practically exemplifying their abhorrence of oppression.

*What is Slavery?* It is not merely "the subjection of one person to the will of another." My child is thus under my control. He does my bidding. He is in subjection to my will. But is this slavery? Is it not rather a wise and wholesome restraint, to be exercised for the accomplishment of important and benevolent ends? I define slavery to be this, to wit, *the right of property in a human being*. I use this phraseology in the largest and most comprehensive sense. It is the *legal* right of buying and selling men and women, as horses and cattle are bought and sold. This is a very different right from that which a master has over his apprentice, or the parent over his child. It is bartering away rights, which the law of God never gave to man. The *will of the Master*, is the iron rule by which the happiness and the destiny of immortal beings are controlled. Grant as many modifications as you choose, of the rigor of this system, prompted by Christian kindness and sympathy. Its main features stand forth in all their frowning and hateful aspect, so long as the right of property in man is recognized and conceded. This right *may* be exercised, at any time, in the violent disruption of the conjugal relations, the sundering of family ties, the wreck of hope, and the utter and the hopeless misery of those, whose only crime consists in a dark hue, which their Creator stamped upon them. Look at some of the legitimate fruits of this fearful power,



lodged in the hands of man. It has produced unspeakable mischief and misery in the domestic relations. It has *transferred* parental authority to a source which God never designed. It has deprived the ignorant of knowledge, and taken from the defenceless the shield of their protection. It claims the right of deciding how much of the will of God, revealed to man, shall be communicated to the slave. It cuts him off from the hope of redress, if he has been wronged. It consigns him to toil as a beast of burden, without any just and adequate remuneration. The avails of his labor is the property of his master, and *cannot* be made his own. He is *himself property*, and of course, can own none.

Now, as to the question whether "the incidental evils of slavery as they are called, are part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it." I say—

1st. The nature of the system proves the truth of this assertion. Let the system be so modified and changed that the evils which now adhere to it shall no longer exist, and you have *another thing*. You may call it slavery, but it is not such in fact. Annihilate the right of *property in man*, and I ask Southern planters if they would feel any zeal in perpetuating slavery?

2d. As a matter of fact, the evils which are charged on slavery, never have been separated from the system. How was it in Greece and Rome? There was no recuperative energy in the system there. What was bad to-day was worse to-morrow, till the deteriorating process engulfed master and slave in one common ruin. In the case of the Jews, I admit there is an exception. But the entire Jewish economy contemplated the gradual abolition of ser-

vitude, and universal emancipation. The year of Jubilee at the latest, struck off the chains from every man, and made him free as the air he breathed. But so far as I know, this is the only exception I need to make, and the reason of this is abundantly obvious from the nature of the Jewish economy. Is there anything in American slavery that *contemplates* the extinction of the system! Is there any year of Jubilee *fixed upon or desired* by the mass of those, who claim property in their fellow-men?

Let the evils which "Meridionus" himself suggests be thoroughly corrected, and it would *amount* to a subversion of the system of slavery. Let a law be passed prohibiting the separation of families, and the domestic slave-trade, and protecting inviolate the marriage relation, and making it incumbent on masters thoroughly to instruct their slaves "in the elements of religious truth"; and slavery would as certainly wither and die as it now exists in its blighting, demoralizing power. You cannot fairly and fully remove the odious features of slavery without striking the axe at the root of the tree. I hold on to my position, therefore, without qualification, notwithstanding the exceedingly shrewd, ingenious argument of your correspondent. For popular effect, it is well adapted to make a strong impression. It will, I am aware, exert an extensive influence at the South. Thousands will rejoice in the comfort it affords to their burdened consciences, and will persuade themselves that they have been too scrupulous and concerned in regard to the exercise of rights which, after all, are clearly their own. Look at the following as an example. "What are the evils that are inseparable from slavery? *There is not one, that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful*

*relations."* Slave-holders under teaching like this, may well resist all expostulations and appeals to adopt a course of measures to subvert a system which is brooding like a mighty incubus over them. If I were a slave-holder, and believed this representation, I should make myself quite contented and let slavery work out its own redemption.

One word in regard to "preaching the gospel in the Southern country." I have great confidence in the power of truth. The gospel fearlessly and faithfully proclaimed, is my only hope in correcting the evils, and exterminating the depravity which abound in the world. But it must be preached in its fullness and in its discriminating energy, or it will fail of accomplishing its glorious design. I do not say it is not preached in this way by our Southern brethren. But I will state a fact, and hold myself responsible for the proof. A clergyman now in this city, was travelling a few months since in Georgia. In an interview he had with a distinguished gentleman, the president of a literary institution, he said to him, "There are many things in successful operation that tend to the subversion of slavery, and among other things, I rely on the increased diffusion of Bible truth as the principal means." Now mark the reply. "You are wrong, Sir," said he. "The gospel will never remove slavery, while ministers hold slaves, and defend the system from the Bible. I do this, and my brethren do it, and we are honest and conscientious in our teaching." The reasoning of this gentleman, I think, was logical and conclusive. No, no—the preaching of the gospel will never do away with slavery, so long as such views are inculcated and enforced from the pulpit.

[DR. PARKER.]

REPLY TO THE REJOINDER.

MR. EDITOR:—I confess myself disappointed in the character of the rejoinder of the correspondent of the *Evangelist*. I am not disappointed in the spirit it breathes. The writer is incapable of departing from the strictest Christian courtesy. But I am disappointed in witnessing the manner in which he has treated my argument, which was designed to prove that “the incidental evils of slavery are not inseparable from it.” He refers to it as “the exceedingly shrewd, ingenious argument of your correspondent.” Allow me to say, that while I thank him for his intended compliment, I should have been much more grateful for an attempt to answer my argument. Courteous allusions to an opponent are indications of a good heart, but it is anything else than sound logic to pass over a strong point with complimenting its ingenuity. I dare not say that such was the *intention* of the writer, but certainly, *in its effect*, it is exactly what, in those who contend for victory in debate, and nothing else, is termed “*throwing dust*.”

I am not aware of the least ingenuity in my argument. Its power lies in the simplest induction of particulars. I have merely asked, what ONE incidental evil of slavery there is, that cannot be separated from it? I have specified such as occurred to me as principal evils—such as insufficient provision, severe chastisement, neglect of instruction, and most

of those forms of evil which a selfish and unprincipled man would be likely to inflict on one who is entirely in his power. I have shown that every one of these have been laid aside by good masters.

I also claimed that my opponent had conceded, that some masters, "one in a hundred or a thousand, hold slaves in harmony with the great law of love." I suppose he will not insist on that exact ratio. It may, peradventure, be one in fifty, and in some neighborhoods, where the gospel has most effect, it may be one in five, or possibly every individual. Yet he admits, that those who act in harmony with the great law of love, are slave-holders. Of course, slavery *in these instances*, is not "whenever a human being, *without crime alleged*, is robbed of his inalienable rights—such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and if all slave-holders came to possess such a character, then they would all "hold slaves in harmony with the great law of love."

He has made another beautiful concession, in his last communication. It is this: "Let the evils which Meridionus himself suggests, be thoroughly corrected, and it would *amount* to a subversion of the system of slavery." Exactly so. It is a luminous statement of the very truth for which I contend. It is like this. Mehemet Ali, a few years since, was doing, as it was said, many things for the improvement of his people. Suppose he had gone on in the exercise of his absolute power, removing one oppressive burden after another. He opens the highways of commerce by steam navigation, and the iron road. He promotes agriculture and manufactures. He encourages the cultivation of the soil, and diminishes the crushing taxation under which industry is paralyzed. He

erects institutions of learning, and adopts a liberalizing system of common school instruction. Thus he aims to remove those things which may be regarded as the ills of a despotic government in wicked hands. Under such a system, the people would be gradually raised, and despotism itself would ultimately give way, before those changes in the popular mind, that should prepare it for the beneficent influences of constitutional government, and enlightened popular influence.

Yet the gospel and the principles of sound wisdom do not allow me to condemn Mehemet Ali *merely because he has absolute power*, nor to insist upon the subversion of his government as the first step in the process of elevating the people and securing for them a higher exercise of the blessings of freedom. Yet he was a great slave-holder, and his government was analogous to that of a Southern planter, except that it was more *absolute*, because over him there was no governmental restraint whatever.

The Correspondent of the *Evangelist* has given a singular definition of slavery. He speaks of slavery as a "*right*." That is very strange. Then he calls it a "*legal right*." Let me quote his language—"I define slavery (says he) to be this, to wit, *the right of property in a human being*. I use this phraseology in the largest and most comprehensive sense. It is the *legal* right of buying and selling men and women as cattle and horses are sold." Why, Mr. Editor, slavery is not a *right* of any sort. The laws of the slaveholding states are statutes regulating the conduct of masters towards each other, and in some respects *limiting* the absolute power of masters over their slaves. Whether these are in all respects the best



laws is a question by itself. We are considering the subject ethically in its relation to individuals. I suppose it would not be denied that if a Southern planter and his three sons should take a hundred slaves and remove with them to a territory where no human government exists, and if they should stay there and treat their people just as they do now, they would be still slave-holders. Yet there could be no buying and selling of men and women there, till a state should be created. Slave-holding is the exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances.

In the *absoluteness* of the power it differs not in any respect from the power that parents exercise over their children. In other respects it is certainly different. A parent does not make his child a slave. The parent's power, the master's power and the absolute civil ruler's power are all alike in this one thing. They are all absolute. The parental power is least liable to abuse, because it is softened continually by natural affection. In the master and the civil despot there is less affection and greater liability to abuse and absolute authority.

One word more. The Correspondent says:—"The abstract doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful ought never to have been broached. It is untrue, indefensible, and has done no good, but a vast amount of mischief."

What is a sin *per se*? It is something that is in its own nature wrong—something that is inseparable from ill desert. Such a thing is blasphemy. Such a thing is robbery, and such is murder. Yet the Correspondent calls slavery something "where a human being is robbed of his inalienable rights." I ask, is

not that a sin *per se*? And how much does it differ from the doctrine of the Garrison school?—Except one calmly states the principle, and the other carries it out in denouncing our Southern brethren, as robbers and men-stealers.

In conclusion, I cannot but express my regret that the Correspondent should intimate that he would do nothing to remove slavery, if the evils that are incidental to the system can be removed.

I am certain that he cannot have considered fully the import of such a remark. I know his heart too well, to doubt that he would help to lift up the poor slave from his condition if he had not permission to blame any individual on earth for the existence of slavery.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.



[MR. ROOD.]

REPLICATION TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—It seems that I disappointed my opponent, in my last communication. I regret this, as I should greatly have preferred to convince him that the ground he has taken in this discussion is untenable and false, and to have prevailed on him to come out boldly in defence of the truth, and to throw his influence into the scale of humanity, benevolence, and mercy. But if his representations are well founded, I have by honeyed phrases and a profusion of compliments attempted to "throw dust," and thus evade the strong arguments with which I was pressed. I had no such intention assuredly. It will be recollected, that the main design of "Meridionius" in the communication in which he intimates that his arguments were met by flattery rather than sound logic, was to subvert a position I had laid down, to wit, that "the incidental evils of slavery, as they are called, are part and parcel of the thing, and can never be separated from it." It would not be quite modest in me to insist that his arguments were fully met. I shall cheerfully submit the decision of this question to the judgment of our readers. But I did triumphantly show, *so far as any attempt has yet been made to convict me of error*—1st. That the nature of the system proves the truth of my position; and 2d. As a matter of fact, the evils which are charged on slavery *never have been separated from the system.* Is

this nothing? On the ground that these positions were sustained, (and "*Meridionus*" *has not attempted to overthrow them*,) I ask in all candor, if the foundation on which he has planted himself is not proved to be as "baseless as the fabric of a vision?" Why did not he manfully meet these positions, and show their irrelevancy or inconclusiveness, instead of intimating that I found it more convenient to pay a compliment, than to grapple with his logic? It is easy for a disputant to say, "You wander from the subject, and 'throw dust,' and urge false issues," when he is pressed with facts and considerations, which hedge up his path. I think his argument was met *as a whole*, if not in the order and the manner that he anticipated. So much for this part of his communication.

Now for another point. The objection to my definition, that "slavery is the *right* of property in a human being," I must regard as urged with the design of "throwing dust," without any conviction of its pertinence or force. "*Meridionus*," as well as every one who took the pains to peruse my article, must have known that I meant this and nothing more—to wit, an *assumed* right, a *claimed* right, a right which the statutes of slave-holding States *wrongfully* give to masters. Most cordially do I respond to the statement of my opponent, that "slavery is not a *right* of any sort," in fact and in truth. It is for this reason that I object to efforts which are *confined* to the removal of the "incidental evils of slavery, as they are called," while the *principle*, which lies at the foundation of this great system of oppression and wrong, is recognized and defended. I will go as far as "*Meridionus*" in mitigating the

rigors of this system—in alleviating the sufferings and woes of those unhappy men and women, who feel its ponderous, crushing weight, and a great deal farther than he is at present disposed to go, in drying up the fountain which sends forth these putrid streams. It is obvious, that the main difference between “Meridionus” and myself, consists in a claim on his part, and a denial on mine, that “*there are no evils in slavery, that are not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations.*” The system is well enough, in his judgment, if those who sustain it cautiously guard against the evils which ordinarily cluster around it. Here we are wide apart as the poles, and I pray heaven we may never come any nearer together, till he abandons a position which I deem so irreconcilable with the golden precept, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.”

It will be borne in mind, that “Meridionus” has not retracted or qualified the above statement, which has filled so many with grief and surprise. I called his particular attention to it, and yet he has made no explanation and given no intimation that he is not willing to be understood according to the natural interpretation which would be put upon his language. I should hardly have believed there is a man north of Mason’s and Dixon’s line, who would have ventured to put forth such a statement, much less to manifest a determination to stand by it. I believe that most Christian men at the South, who see slavery *as it is*, would abjure the statement, as utterly unfounded and false. If Northern men can take this ground, and offer such palliations for the atrocities of

slavery, the prospect is indeed dark and hopeless for the poor slave. If the children of "Meridionus" were in bondage, subject to the brutality of ignorant and merciless overseers; if he himself was liable to be torn away from his wife and pleasant home, and sold like a "brute beast" to the highest bidder, he might seriously question whether the "LAWFUL RELATIONS" of slavery are not very *unlawful* and oppressive. He might feel somewhat as a father and a husband did, who was sometime since torn from his family, and sold to the extreme Southern market. He was comparatively a young man, and was strongly attached to his wife and children. The price paid for him was nearly eight hundred dollars. A gentleman now in this city, happened to be in a town in Georgia, through which this colored man, with others, was driven. They arrived on Saturday night. The slave-dealer got his "gang of human cattle" ready to start early on Sabbath morning. The poor slave, of whom I have spoken, was exceedingly dejected and distressed. He thought of his wife and children, from whom he had been forced away by the merciless cupidity of his new master. At length he became desperate, and declared, "The wretch who has bought me shall make no money by the purchase." In leaving the place, they were obliged to pass a ferry. He watched his opportunity, and plunged into the river, and with a death-grasp seized whatever he found at the bottom, and held on till life was extinct. He choose "strangling and death, rather than life," with the misery he endured, and a perpetual exile from those he loved. "Meridionus," in like circumstances, might exhibit an equal desperation. And yet slavery is a "LAWFUL RELATION,"

and needs only to be guarded against the evils incidental to it, to be a fair system, not to be rudely assailed, much less denounced as *intrinsically wrong, oppressive, and wicked*.

Stop, stop, says "Meridionus," you are quite too fast. The traffic in slaves is a feature of the system I abhor, and it ought instantly to be corrected. So is cruel treatment, insufficiency of food and clothing, and the neglect to teach slaves their relations and their duty to God. Well, correct these, and a long catalogue of similar things, and render to servants, as "Meridionus" insists should be done, "that which is just and equal," and slavery no longer exists. The system is prostrated and subverted, as I have shown in my last communication, and you have an *entirely different thing*.

The effort to convict me of inconsistency in saying that "the abstract doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful, and ought never to have been broached," is, in my judgment, an utter failure. By this, I meant, as "Meridionus" well knows, that the laws of slaveholding States may force good men into a position which they deplore and abhor. They hold slaves not of choice, but by necessity. They are restrained from acting out the promptings of their humane, benevolent feelings by unrighteous and oppressive legislation. Now, if they do the best they can, in their circumstances; if they remonstrate and petition for a change of those laws which environ them with difficulties; *if they truly desire to give freedom to their bondsmen*; then I say they are not chargeable with the guilt of oppression. Their condition is most unfortunate, but it is not one that deserves censure. How many slave-holders there are, who have these feelings

and pursue this course, I know not. But if there are five hundred, or even fifty, the statement that slavery is *per se*, or in all cases sinful, is without foundation. But is this admitting that wrong, flagrant wrong does not lie somewhere in perpetuating slavery? Is this the abandonment of any position I have laid down? I think not.

I will now, for a moment, contrast my definition of slavery with that given by "Meridionus." He says, "Slave-holding is the exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances. I think this is mere logomachy. There is no such thing as an "absolute power of one mind over another." "Meridionus" is too familiar with the elaborate work of "Locke on the Human Understanding," and Reid's "Inquiry into the Human Mind," and his "Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man," seriously to claim that this definition of slavery can be defended. There is such a thing as an "absolute power" over the body. This may be scourged and mutilated, and given as food to the fowls of the air. But the mind, thanks to Heaven, is unfettered and free. Men with all their malignity cannot reach it, or prevent those pious aspirations which prove that we are allied to angels and bear the impress of immortality. Look at my definition. "*Slavery is the right of property in a human being.*" I have sufficiently guarded the meaning which I attach to "*right*" in this connection. Here, you have something tangible, something that every body can understand, something which is not, at least, obnoxious to the charge of a contradiction and an absurdity. You have more. You have demonstration perfect and complete, that the "right of property



in human beings" is the only thing about slavery that makes its boldest champions zealous in perpetuating it. Hence, the cry all over the South against abolitionists, "You would wrest from us our property and take away our means of living." Hence, so much is said about the five hundred millions invested in slaves, which would be sacrificed by a universal emancipation. I leave our readers to judge who is right on this point.

In closing, will "Meridionus" please to state more explicitly what course, in his judgment, true wisdom demands in regard to this great subject? I do not refer to the action of Northern Christians, but especially to that action which our brethren at the South ought to take. Ought they not to do what they can to form a public sentiment against slavery? Ought they not to hold up the system as worthy of universal reprobation? Ought not ministers fearlessly to exhibit the wrongs of oppression, which prevail according to your own showing to such an alarming extent? In a word, ought not the system of slavery to be represented as "doomed of Heaven," and worthy of the execration of all good men? Ought not Christian men of every name to unite in effecting its subversion? Or is it true, that "*there is not one evil of slavery that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations*"? "Meridionus" will excuse my seeming pertinacity, but I am resolved that this sentiment shall be *retracted or re-affirmed*.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

[DR. PARKER.]

REPLY TO THE REPLICATION.

MR. EDITOR :—“ The Replication ” is to my mind the most satisfactory of all the communications of the Correspondent of the *Evangelist*, because it has brought out more fully the views of the writer ; and I am satisfied that it is only necessary that they should be understood, to be disapproved by all thinking minds, that have not committed themselves to the doctrines of those technically called “ abolitionists.” He admits that “ it would not be quite modest for [him] to insist that [my] arguments were fully met.” This concession is very liable to mislead the reader. One would think that the writer meant by it, that he had *attempted* to meet the argument, but that it would not be modest in him to say that he had *fully* met it. Whereas, it will be seen by any one, who will be at the trouble to read the preceding communications on both sides, that *no attempt* whatever has been made to answer the argument by which I chiefly combated his position. I made an induction of the evils incidental to slavery, and showed that they could be, and that they were in many instances, separated from slavery, and of course that they were *not a part and parcel of slavery, and inseparable from it.* This position, it is true, he has re-affirmed, and attempted to substantiate by *an* argument, but my *argument* he has, for some reason, not seen fit to meet in any way. I mean, he has *not attempted* to meet it.



When he says afterwards, "I think his argument was met *as a whole*," I do not suppose he intends any misrepresentation of the facts. He probably meant that he thinks he has overthrown the *position* which I had attempted to maintain—for certainly he could not meet my argument, without showing that the wrong facts had been adduced, or a fallacious application of them had been made. The argument by which he has attempted to maintain his position, shall receive attention in another part of my communication.

I feel myself called upon to notice in this place a mode of enforcing his views, which I am sure a man of so much native kindness and Christian urbanity as the Correspondent, will not approve in his cooler moments.

I make a great allowance for the influence of the cause which he has espoused upon his feelings. The abolitionists, as a class, have evidently depended greatly upon the influence of personal censure, to carry their cause.—When their arguments are refuted, and their assumptions shown to be unsound, they are very apt to satisfy themselves by charging their opponents with "offering palliations for the atrocities of slavery," and with entertaining the "*design* of throwing dust without any conviction of its pertinence or force." I know, Mr. Editor, that the Correspondent is my personal friend, and, (his doctrines and their influence apart,) one of the kindest men in the world—and I know he will regret the attempt to exert the least influence against my reasonings, by intimating, that in taking "this ground," which I have taken, I "offer palliations for the atrocities of slavery;" and that he will be particularly

dissatisfied with speaking in the manner he has done of my *motive* in objecting to his definition of slavery, where he says: "The objection to my definition, that 'slavery is the right of property in a human being,' I must regard as urged with the *design* of 'throwing dust,' without any conviction of its pertinency or force." The writer knows me too well certainly, to think for one moment that I can be induced to waive my objection to his definition, by a remark of such a character. I beg of the Correspondent to have patience with me, while I proceed to renew and substantiate my objection to his definition. I repeat it, then. Slavery is not a right of any sort. It is not an *assumed* right, nor a *claimed* right. Slavery is a term, by which the relation of two parties is indicated. The slaves are one party, the masters are the other. The state is not a party in the relation. A State *may* hold slaves, but in the condition of things of which we speak, in this country, individual citizens hold slaves. But whoever may hold slaves—slavery is neither a *right*, nor an "*assumed right*," nor a "*a claimed right*." Slavery, as expressive of the condition of the subordinate party, is the absolute subjection of slaves to their masters. Whether it is consistent with *their rights*, that they should be under this subjection or not, is a distinct question. Slaves *are* in absolute subjection to their masters. Slavery, as expressive of the condition of the superior party, is the *holding* of slaves, the exercising of the power that keeps *slaves* in absolute subjection. Whether it be right for a master to hold slaves, is a distinct question. If he exercises the *power* of keeping slaves in subjection to the control of his will, he is one of the parties to the relation

which we call slavery. If the State aids him in exercising this power, he is a slave-holder. If the State does *not* aid him, he is still a slave-holder. If he stands alone, where there is no State authority over him, as long as he maintains this control, he is a slave-holder. If you suppose it to be *right* for him to hold them in subjection, he is a slave-holder. If you suppose it to be *wrong*, he is equally a slave-holder. If he assumes he has a right to hold them in this subjection, he is a slave-holder; if he admits that he has no right, and holds them in subjection, even in violation of his own conscience, he is a slave-holder. If he acquires them by purchase, and holds them in this subjection, he is a slave-holder; if he inherits them, and holds them thus, he is a slave-holder. If the government which the State extends over the master, legislates with regard to slaves, and calls them "chattels," the man that keeps them in subjection is a slaveholder; and if the State should amend its code, and take away from masters the power of selling their slaves—that is, if they were not allowed to regard and treat them as property—yet, as long as they hold them in this subjection, they are slave-holders. Slavery, then, as it respects the superior party in the relation, is the possession and exercise of a power. I have called it *an absolute power*. The Correspondent thinks my language too strong, and refers to Locke and Reid, to show that masters cannot exercise so high a power. I think he is entirely right. I only intend by the "absolute power of one mind over another," what is commonly meant by absolute power in popular parlance—the power of governing by the will of the ruler alone.

But the Correspondent has himself given up his

definition, and called "the right of property in human beings, a thing *about* slavery, that makes its champions zealous in perpetuating it." His language is very singular, after maintaining that the *right*, or the *assumed*, or *claimed* right of property, is slavery itself. "You have (says he) a demonstration perfect and complete, that the right of property in human beings is the *only thing about slavery* that makes its boldest champions zealous in perpetuating it." Take, then, his defined use of the term slavery, and substitute for it the *word itself* and it reads thus, "*Slavery is the only thing about slavery* that makes its boldest champions, &c." He certainly did not mean to say this. He forgot that he had maintained that the word *slavery*, and the phrase "*the right of property in a human being*," are synonymous. Well he might forget it, for the phrase is no description of the force of the term. He has admitted, then, the very distinction for which I contend. Slavery is one thing. The right to buy and sell slaves, as a right sustained by the State, is another.—They are as distinct from one another as the power of a parent to control his child, and the right to bind him out as an apprentice. God has given parents an absolute control over their children. The State has secured to a father a right to bind out his son in an apprenticeship, till he is twenty-one years of age, and to receive a consideration for the father's advantage, if he choose to do so. There is no limitation in time for the continuance of parental authority. So says Paley. A child is as much bound by the fifth commandment at fifty years, as at five years of age.

Suppose a large number of parents were to abuse this power over their children, and suppose the most

selfish of them should defend their conduct by saying, that the exercise of this power is profitable to them, would that prove that the possession of absolute power is "robbery?" and the truth of the doctrine of the Garrison School, that we "had better emancipate our wives and children, before we talk of emancipating Southern slaves?" What does the Correspondent mean by asking me if I am willing that my children and myself should be subjected to the cruelties of severe masters? No, certainly. Let me ask if he would like it for himself. I presume he will say—no. Very well, we are even on that score. Does he wish to imply that I am defending these brutalities? If he does, I do not think myself called upon for any defence against such a charge. But I cannot suppose that he does. And yet I am at a loss to interpret his language.

One word in reply to the arguments of the Correspondent, by which he attempts to prove that "*The incidental evils of slavery are a part and parcel of the thing and can never be separated from it.*"

1st. He alleges that he has proved it from "*the nature of the system.*" The argument is, if you take away the evils you have *another thing*. I deny this and allege that if you take away unkind treatment of every sort, you do not thereby take away slavery so long as the master governs absolutely. If he rules with the gentleness and benevolence of a perfectly holy being, yet, if he rules absolutely over his servant, the essential elements of slavery, are still there.

2d. He maintains that the evils have never been separated from the system. Does this prove that these evils are *necessary* from the nature of the system? Why, if this be logic, it proves that the mar-

riage relation is *an enormous wrong*. Time would fail us to recount the miseries of families. And they never have been separated from the system.—What a sin, a constitutional monarchy like that of Great Britain, must be according to this mode of reasoning! Read the extracts published in the *Observer* of the 15th inst., from a Boston correspondent, describing the miseries of factory life in England,—read it, and weep over poor down-trodden humanity. Then, do not forget that such evils never have been, in fact, separated from the system. No, Mr. Editor, I cannot allow my good friend, the Correspondent, to claim all the sufferings of poor slaves, as arguments for a theory by which he is, without intending it, binding the heavy burdens upon the poor. The truth is, there is no question whether we do not both, with equal sincerity, deplore the sufferings of slaves, and, though he may possess *more* philanthropy than his friend, and may know that he possesses more, yet I am not willing that any superiority over me, in this moral respect, shall be weighed against proofs. I am glad, if he loves the poor black man. I thank him on behalf of my Master, for his sympathy with the poor. I will repay him with the same in kind. But I am not willing to take his sympathy for suffering slaves, and his glowing descriptions of the injustice of oppressors, as proof that one cannot hold a slave, without oppressing him.

The Correspondent wishes me to re-affirm my position.

I certainly have no objection to try to make my meaning plain and to place my argument in a clearer light. From the fact that he had not noticed the argument, made no analysis of it, nor as much as at-



tempted to point out any fallacy, I was beginning to think that it was *too clear*, and that, on that account, he preferred not to notice it. But it seems I am mistaken, and my opponent does not fully comprehend it. The matter lies thus. The Correspondent of the *Evangelist* had said in his communication in your paper of Dec. 18th, that "The incidental evils [of slavery] are *part and parcel of the thing and can never be separated from it.*" I asserted that this proposition is not true. I attempted by an argument to prove that it is not.

I first adduced a large number of these evils, such as *cruelty in punishing—insufficient food and clothing—separating families by sale—neglect of instruction, &c., &c.*

It was not my object to point out all the methods in which slaves suffer injurious treatment. But I supposed then, and do now, that it was *this sort* of evils that my opponent referred to in his proposition. That I was right in that supposition is obvious from the fact that he has not complained of being misunderstood in this respect, as well, as from his repeated reference to this very class of evils as the things which render the system odious.

Of course, there is no dispute between us as to the question whether Southern men are sinners, or whether there, as elsewhere, there is a tendency in superiors to seek their own aggrandizement by unjustly making a gain of the weak. Masters have great power over slaves—I have called it *absolute power*—the phrase is probably understood. I maintained that the possession of absolute power does not necessarily imply any wrong in the person that holds it. The wrong, if there be wrong, lies in the abuse of

power. The fact that one man rules another with absolute sway, does not prove that the master is acting wickedly. If he has exercised that power unjustly in inflicting those evils which are incidental to slavery, yet he is under no *necessity* of doing so. If he has punished with cruelty, what can prevent the possibility of his repentance and reformation? If he has overworked his poor servant, or withheld from him the comforts that he needs, cannot he cease from this species of injustice? What vice is there that cannot be repented of and abandoned—what virtue that cannot be cherished and cultivated by both slaves and their masters? What, then, are the evils that are *inseparable* from slavery? I wish the Correspondent would answer this by pointing out barely *one*. To express sentiments of grief for fear that these questions will cause slave-holders to be content to let slavery remain for ever, is not meeting the question. If he is grieved with the tendency of my views, I am equally grieved with the tendency of his. We will let the tears on both sides balance each other. The truth is what we want. He has maintained that “slavery” is not a sin in itself—“and yet that it is robbery;”—that “hundreds hold slaves in harmony with the great law of love,” and “the relation is unlawful and oppressive,” that “the *relation* ought to be denounced as *intrinsically wrong, oppressive and wicked?*”

The Correspondent asks me to state what, in my judgment, our Southern brethren ought to do in respect to slavery? I can answer this to *my own* satisfaction. I think their duty is clear. But I have not room in this communication.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.



[MR. ROOD.]

TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—As I anticipated, "Meridionus" apparently shrinks from the reiteration of the sentiment, that "*there is not one evil in slavery, that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations.*" He says, "I certainly have no objection to try to make my meaning plain, and to place my argument in a clearer light." I asked for no such thing. I had no difficulty in apprehending the statement; but I did wish to know if that position is one which, after due reflection, he is willing to endorse, and means to defend. The answer is somewhat doubtful. He does not directly re-affirm his statement, nor does he admit that it is erroneous. The fair inference, however, from what he does say is, that he still adheres to it. If so, it would have been better frankly to avow it, and thus, at once, remove all doubt and debate. "What then," he asks, "are the evils that are inseparable from slavery? I wish the Correspondent would answer this, by pointing out barely *one*." "Meridionus" shall be gratified in his request.

One evil inseparable from slavery is, *brutalizing the mind, and shrouding the enslaved in ignorance.* I am aware that many slaves are instructed in the precepts and principles of the gospel, and furnish evidence of piety. But the great mass of them are not instructed—and those who are, for the most part re-

ceive oral instruction. They are not taught to read and examine the word of God for themselves. The plea is, if they are taught to read the Bible, they will read "incendiary publications," which represent them as an injured and oppressed people, and they will rise and revenge their supposed wrongs. "Meridionus" will not deny, that a thorough system of elementary education would subvert the system of slavery. Everybody knows it would. So the subject is understood all over the South, as is proved by the unrighteous statutes, making it a penal offence to establish schools to educate slaves. They are kept in ignorance, because it is urged they cannot with safety be instructed. The plea is unquestionably well founded. Give to slaves, as a body, half the education that is obtained by the common classes at the North, and there is no earthly power that would prevent them from throwing off the yoke of oppression, and *claiming* and *gaining* their freedom. Southern people understand this full well, and if "Meridionus" denies it, they will not.

Another evil inseparable from slavery, consists in *the unlawful control which slave-holders exercise over the children of the enslaved*. The Apostle says, Col. iii. 20, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Let me ask "Meridionus"—Do not masters nullify this divine precept uniformly in the slave-holding states? Will he pretend that children are permitted to obey their parents, as God has enjoined it upon them? Is not the law of the master, not the precept of the parent, the rule by which they are governed? A child may not minister to the parent in sickness, or wipe the cold sweat of death from his brow, if the master

chooses to forbid these last offices of sympathy and affection. A mother may desire the soothing influence of a daughter's love, in her last hours, and be refused, if the cupidity of the master chooses to interpose, and drive her to the cotton-field. Will "Meridionus" please to inform me in what other "LAWFUL RELATIONS" such inhumanity *can* be practised with impunity? The allusion to the evils incidental to the marriage relation, has not, I think, any great force. There are many unhappy husbands and wives, made such by their ill-temper, indiscretions, and sins, I admit. But mark: all that is necessary to remove these evils, is to lead them to embrace the gospel in its transforming and purifying power. Chrysostom truly said—"Bring me a man as ungovernable as the storm, and sottish as the swine, and with a few words of this divine gospel, I will make him gentler than the zephyr, and purer than the translucent stream." But there are slaveholders professing to be, and, I doubt not, are really converted, who do not give to parents in bondage that control of their children, to which they are entitled by the word of God. Bring to repentance an intemperate husband or an irreligious wife, and you remove their vices, and render them kind, affectionate, and happy. But in the case of the slave-holder, you must do something more. You must bring him away from the influence of slavery, before he *can in all respects*, if I may so speak, fulfil the law of love.

There is another evil inseparable from slavery. While the system is maintained, masters *cannot render to their servants "that which is just and equal."* The nature of the system forbids this, on the broad scale which Christianity requires. It cannot be done,

without awarding to servants a just compensation for their labor. But as soon as this should become the settled policy of the slave-holding States, there would be no reluctance to adopt a course of judicious measures, which would in a reasonable time result in a universal emancipation.

There is still another evil, which, if not inseparable from slavery, uniformly attaches to it, and it is one of no small magnitude. I refer to its blinding, blunting, hardening influence upon those who live in the midst of it. There is something quite remarkable in this feature of slavery. I have known Northern men go to reside in slave-holding States, with clear views of human rights, and a conscientious purpose to exert what influence they could to subvert the system. But in a little time, they seemed to lose their zeal and sympathy in behalf of the slave, and to settle down in comparative indifference as to the appalling evils with which they were surrounded, and sometimes they have gone so far as to palliate and defend a system which they have always held in abhorrence. I cannot tell exactly how or why this is, but I suppose the atmosphere is tainted, and they look at things through a hazy, distorted medium, and are insensibly led to a modification and change of their views, and sometimes to the utter abandonment of long cherished principles. I could point to some affecting examples, where this metamorphic aspect has been exhibited. If this is not an "iniquity" to be punished by the judges, it is certainly an evil greatly to be deplored! When "Meridionus" shall dispose of these things in due order, and by sound logic, I will name some other things for his consideration.

I pass now to the main topic of his last communication, which consists of a labored argument to substantiate the truth of his position, that "slaveholding is the exercise of a power of one mind over another, absolutely, and in certain circumstances." It seems to me that this is "darkening counsel by words without knowledge." It is, at best, a mere abstraction, as I hope to be able to show. According to this doctrine, every popular, powerful preacher, who has the esteem and confidence of his hearers, is a slave-holder, and his people are slaves. "Meridionus" admits that "absolute power of one mind over another," is, in the nature of the case, impossible. He intended, "what is commonly meant by absolute power in popular parlance." I know clergymen, who have what amounts to nearly this control over a portion of their hearers; but they would think it very strange, if they should be represented as slave-holders. There are parents who exert a still more unlimited control over the minds of their children. Are they slave-holders? Mark especially the following paragraph: "If he [the master] rules with the gentleness and benevolence of a perfectly holy being, yet if he rules absolutely over his servant, the essential elements of slavery are there." Does "Meridionus" really suppose this statement will be received as truth? Is he willing to abide by it, and commit himself to its defence? What being possesses such absolute control of mind, as the blessed God! "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Good men and angels are under the absolute control of God; but according to this doctrine, instead of being the "freemen of the Lord,"

they are bond slaves. An argument that leads to such revolting conclusions, is worse than a mere abstraction. I leave our readers to give it a name. In this discussion, we are professedly looking at slavery *as it is*,—not as it may *possibly* exist, in circumstances unknown in real life.

Slavery is entirely different from the *parental relation*. There is scarcely a feature in it that bears a resemblance to this relation. In all divinely established social relations there is a native element of love, which softens authority, and cheers obedience. But slavery is an unnatural, forced relation, where the subject has no natural love to prompt cheerful obedience, nor the master any parental feeling to restrain wrath and tyranny. Parents never speak of their children as “chattels,” or put them up in the market to the highest bidder.

Slavery differs in *all its essential elements* from the *system of apprenticeship*. So the planters of the West Indies understood it; so it is universally conceded except by those who have some favorite theory to sustain. The master has the avails of the labor of the apprentice, but he is supposed to render a full equivalent in his care over him, and the schooling he gives him, and his efforts to prepare him for future respectability and happiness, and usefulness. In every step taken, the good of the apprentice is contemplated as well as the interests of the master. It is precisely the reverse in the case of the slave. He is a “*chattel personal*,” a thing, the *property* of his master to be disposed of as a horse or an ox. And yet, we are gravely told that the essential element of slavery is the control of one mind over another! “It is not,” says “Meridionus,” “an *assumed* right, nor

a *claimed* right. It is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated." If this is all, what a harmless thing slavery must be! Who would object to "*a term*" by which two parties choose to indicate their relations? If this is slavery, it is wonderful that the mass of men should not have made the discovery at an earlier period. Just see with what severity of language Mr. Monroe speaks of "*a term*." "We have found," says he in his speech in the Virginia Convention, "that this evil has preyed upon the very vitals of the Union, and has been prejudicial to all the States in which it has existed." Hear what Patrick Henry said in 1773. "Is it not amazing that at a time when the rights of humanity are defined and understood with precision, in a country above all others fond of liberty, that in such an age and country, we find men professing a religion the most humane, mild, gentle and generous, adopting a principle as repugnant to humanity as it is inconsistent with the Bible and destructive to liberty." Listen to what Jefferson said of "*a term*." "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep forever. The Almighty has no attribute which can take sides with us in such a contest." Hear what Wm. Pinkney said in the House of Delegates, Maryland, 1789. "Iniquitous and most dishonorable to Maryland is that dreary system of bondage, which her laws have hitherto supported with a solicitude worthy of a better object, and her citizens by their practice countenanced: founded on a disgraceful traffic to which the parent country lent her fostering aid from motives of interest.—*Its continuance is as shameful as its origin.* Wherefore should we confine the edge of



censure to our ancestors, or those from whom they purchased! Are not we equally guilty? *They* strewed the seeds of slavery; *we* cherish and sustain the growth. *They* introduced the system; *we* enlarge and invigorate and confirm it. For shame, Sir! let us throw off the mask: 'tis a cob-web one at best, and the world will see through it. It will not do thus to talk like philosophers, and act like unrelenting tyrants." Read Mr. Swain's address of North Carolina in 1830. "Is it nothing to us that seventeen hundred thousand of the people of our country are doomed illegally to the most abject and vile slavery that was ever tolerated on the face of the earth? Are Carolinians deaf to the piercing cries of humanity? Are they insensible to the demands of justice? Let any man of spirit and feeling, for a moment, cast his eye over the land of slavery. Think of the nakedness of some, the hungry yearnings of others, the flowing tears and heaving sighs of parting relatives; the wailings of lamentation and woe; the bloody cut of the keen lash and the frightful scream that rends the very skies:—and all this to gratify ambition, lust, pride, avarice, vanity, and other depraved feelings of the human heart. Too long has our country been unfortunately lulled to sleep, feeding on the golden dreams of superficial politicians, fanciful poets and anniversary orations. *The worst is not generally known.* Were all the miseries and horrors of slavery to burst at once into view, a peal of seven-fold thunder could scarce strike greater alarm."

What a pity these *Southern* men had not been taught that slavery is a mere "*term by which the relation of two parties is indicated.*" They might have



spared a great deal of their burning indignation, and severe reproof. They needed certainly the light of later times to give them a fair and full understanding of the subject.

I received the following note from a distinguished gentleman in reply to one I addressed to him, which will be pertinent in this place. He is known to the public as holding conservative views on the subject of slavery, and he is, by his own contribution, a life-member of the Colonization Society. He says,—“The position of ‘O. R. Meridionus’ ‘that slave-holding is the absolute control of one mind over another,’ of which you ask my opinion, is indeed singular. That slavery *includes* what is expressed in this definition, is true enough. But does it include nothing more? What would be said of this in the slave-States? what would slave-owners say of it? I apprehend there would be some demurring to this advocacy of their cause. It might be pleasant to them to see the controversy in which they are engaged with almost the whole world, reduced to so small a compass and presented on their side in so compact and defensible a form, but from what I know of them, I am mistaken, if for their wives and children’s sake they would not ask to be excused from taking the position which ‘Meridionus’ has *invented* for them. I say *invented* for them, for he is certainly entitled to the honor of a new discovery. If the absolute control of one mind over another makes a state of slavery, then, according to the scriptural view of the subject, every man’s wife is his slave, and every man’s child is his slave, and your hearers on the Sabbath are very often, I presume, reduced to the condition of slaves under you as their master.

“Now, unless ‘Meridionus’ will take the ground that our wives and children are slaves in the full and proper sense of the term, he *must add something* to his definition of slavery. He must make it comprehend some *power* or *right* which the husband and the father do not possess. What I suppose he must add is the very thing which you have urged upon him; to wit, the *right* of property with the *power* to alienate by selling. The definition of ‘Meridionus,’ was evidently contrived by him to suit his dogma that ‘*there are no evils in slavery that are not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations.*’”

I have received another letter from a gentleman who has been a slave-holder, and at a great pecuniary sacrifice liberated all his slaves. He says,—“I have some knowledge of slavery and slave-holders. I never before heard such a definition as that given by ‘Meridionus.’ But I do know that they consider slaves as *property*—that they buy and sell them as such, and at death, will their farms perhaps to their elder children, and their slaves, Jenny, Roda, Dan, Bob, Ellis, &c., to their minor children to be hired out or sold for their special benefit. I think that slave-holders as well as abolitionists will need a good deal of instruction to understand the definition of ‘Meridionus.’ It seems to put slave-holders largely in the majority, even making *Wm. Penn, John Wesley, and their numerous followers either slaves or slave-holders.*”

A word more in close. I think I have a right to complain of the pertinacity of my opponent in striving to make me responsible for sentiments which he knows I detest and abhor. How many times must I reiterate that I make a wide distinction between the

*system of slavery, and some, who are unfortunately involved in its evil workings!* How many times must I repeat that the dogma that slavery is *per se* sinful, is not one justly chargeable upon me? I will make one more effort to put "Meridionus" right in regard to my views, and if I fail, I will give up the matter in despair.

I know a gentleman who resides in a slave-holding State. He owned a slave by the name of Tom. He saw the evil tendencies of the system, and resolved to give this slave his freedom. He was coming North, and he said to Tom that he should take him to a free State and give him his liberty. The slave earnestly plead with him to abandon his purpose. Said he, "Master, you know I have a wife owned by Mr. ———. I can't take her with me, and I can't be separated from her. Do this, master—retain your present relation to me for the sake of my protection, and for the sake of my wife." The good man (I wish I was at liberty to publish his name) felt the force of the appeal. He said, "Tom, make your own arrangements, and receive all your wages for your labor, and I will hold my present legal relation for your good." Is that excellent man guilty of sin for holding that slave? Ought he not to be commended and honored by the wise and the good! And yet, the system which forces him into such a position, a position which he deplures, is one which all good men should condemn. Is not "Meridionus" capable of seeing this? If he cannot, I am consoled with the conviction that all our readers will.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

[DR. PARKER.]

[WHAT EVILS ARE INSEPARABLE FROM SLAVERY?]

MR. EDITOR:—The Correspondent has my thanks, for attempting to point out the evils that are “*inseparable* from slavery.” There are a few other things in his communication, that demand a passing notice. I will advert to them in the order in which they occur.

1. He intimates that it is an evil which “*uniformly* attaches to [slavery,]” that those who live where it exist, are blinded and hardened, so as to become indifferent to its appalling evils. I have lived where it exists, and have not been blinded, nor hardened, nor made indifferent to the appalling evils of slavery. But let me remind the Correspondent again, that the question is not which of us is morally or religiously in the best state. I believe him to be an excellent man, and I know myself to be a great sinner; but I am not willing that the precious cause of truth should be staked on my unworthiness. Besides, the Correspondent ought to remember, that he is not willing to be held responsible for “insinuating the same doctrines with the Garrison school.”

2. He intimates, that if masters have “absolute power,” then ministers are slave-holders in respect to their flocks. They must have more power, then, in his location, than they have in mine. The clergymen in my neighborhood are *as far*, at least, from having absolute power, as the government of the

United States is from being an absolute government, and I guess farther.

3. He intimates, that if slave-holders have absolute power, then God must be a slave-holder. It seems to me a *non sequitur*—nevertheless, if the Correspondent insists upon the inference, it is *his*, and not mine; for no man can deny, with the least show of plausibility, that slave-holders do exercise absolute power.

5. He speaks of my definition of slavery in a very extraordinary manner. I defined the word slavery, by saying it is a term.

He had maintained that the word slavery meant a *right*—then that it was not a real right, but “an *assumed* right, a *claimed* right.” I denied that the term slavery had any such meaning, and alleged that it was a term employed to indicate a certain relation between two parties, which relation I proceeded to describe in the following language:—

“The slaves are one party, the masters are the other. The state is not a party in the relation. A State *may* hold slaves, but in the condition of things of which we speak, in this country, individual citizens hold slaves—but, whoever may hold slaves, slavery is neither a *right*, nor an ‘*assumed* right,’ nor ‘a *claimed* right.’ Slavery, as expressive of the condition of the subordinate party, is the absolute subjection of slaves to their masters. Whether it is consistent with *their rights*, that they should be under this subjection or not, is a distinct question. Slaves *are* in absolute subjection to their masters. Slavery, as expressive of the condition of the superior party, is the *holding* of slaves, the exercising of the power that keeps *slaves* in abso-

lute subjection. Whether it be right for a master to hold slaves, is a distinct question, &c."

Does the Correspondent think it fair in debate to represent such a definition, as if it had been maintained that slavery was nothing but a *term*—a mere word? Does he gain any thing for his argument by it? Is he willing that it should be published in a permanent form, as a specimen of his character as an inquirer for what is true and right? If such a form should be given to these papers, I am sure he will wish his pen drawn over all his allusions to "*a term*."

6. He quotes from Mr. Monroe and Mr. Jefferson some eloquent passages against slavery. I have often quoted parts of the same myself. They are beautiful testimonies to the fact, that there is no where such a strong sense of the evils of slavery, as among slave-holders themselves, notwithstanding the Correspondent has maintained that slavery *uniformly* blinds and hardens those that live in the midst of it, and renders them indifferent to its appalling evils. I know not what the Correspondent's object was, in introducing these quotations, unless it was to suggest the idea that I did not think as badly of slavery as these men. Yet I can scarcely believe that this was his object, because the Correspondent knows that I am as much opposed to slavery as himself.

7. The letter to the Correspondent. It is sufficient to say of it, that as far as it appears, the writer of the letter never had seen my more full explanation of the term slavery. In answer to the declaration of the Correspondent, that slavery was "a right of property," &c., I had alleged, that it was not *a right*, but as far as the master was concerned, a power, *a*

*control* that one human being exercised over another, &c. This was disputed. Then, in a subsequent communication, I proceeded to define the term slavery more fully. I thus defined the use of the word slavery : Slavery is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated. The slaves are one party, the masters are the other, &c. See the beginning of the second paragraph above. Why did not the Correspondent show, that this definition, which was a mere expansion of my denial that slavery is "*a right*," and my assertion that it is an "*absolute control*," was an unsound definition? I think it was because he could not. I only ask the reader to peruse the definition again. Meantime I have correspondents too. Several warm opposers of slavery have volunteered their approbation. Here is an extract from one of their communications, a gentleman known for his philanthropy and intelligence, a gentleman who has traveled in the South, without being blinded or hardened. I will venture to stake the good sense, and clearness, and *urbanity* of his communication, against the same qualities in the character of the letter of the correspondent of my opponent in this debate. He says as follows :—

\* \* "Your articles may be of very great use to those who speak and write of slavery, without having any distinct ideas of the condition of the slave. There has been a remarkable confusion of words on the subject, the effect, no doubt, of confused ideas. Some have confounded *slavery* with *slave-holding*, in defiance of the King's English; and others have imagined that 'the property-power,' or the laws on the subject, constitute the very essence of slavery.

"In your definition of the word *slavery*, as 'a term denoting the complete subjection of one party to the au-



thority of another, in certain circumstances,' you have *described* the very thing. Your definition is a picture, a description—and every reader may see that you are not speaking of the laws, or of the traffic, or any other abuses, which are the accidents of slavery, but which are not essential to the relation between master and servant—but of a *condition between two parties*, which may and does often exist, amid all the evils incidental to the exercise of absolute power, without wrong to either party concerned. Slave-holding, then, is one thing; and the traffic in slaves, and other abuses which spring from avarice and cupidity, are very different things; and there is surely no evidence of remarkable perspicacity in the statements, which make these evils a part and parcel of the thing. If the power to sell or barter away the servant, is *essential* to slavery—many Southern masters are *not* slave-holders—for they do not exercise the right of selling their faithful servants; they do not even claim it as a right. Some of them would about as soon think of selling their children. If this 'property power' be a *part* of the thing—many slave-holders do not hold their servants in the state or condition of slavery; that is—they are *not* slave-holders!"

8. I have myself no objection to the course pursued by the gentleman of the South referred to by the Correspondent in respect to his slave Tom. I presume he was actuated by philanthropic principles, and I have no doubt that the political system that sustains slavery is quite as bad; indeed, in my opinion, it is a great deal worse than the Correspondent, or any other man that has not lived under it, ever dreamed of. But there are hundreds of good men that hold slaves, and manage their plantations, without any such arrangements as were made in respect to Tom, who are nevertheless not guilty of the sins which the Correspondent charges upon them.

Now, Mr. Editor, this matter must be understood—and no intimations that I have been blinded and



hardened, or that I think well of the system of slavery, or that I am apologizing for its evils, shall prevent my speaking the truth, in regard to the calumnies heaped upon our Southern brethren.

A good lady who had never been at the South, once said to me, that the slaves were *all* cruelly dealt with, in that they were not well fed, and were *never* treated kindly. I replied, there are certainly *some* exceptions. For instance: my friend, the Rev. J. L. Montgomery, of Bayou Sarah, but now, I trust, in heaven, told me that he had all his slaves served with good hot coffee, before going into the cotton field in the morning; and I have often seen the late Hon. Judge Harper, of New Orleans, take a little slave on one knee, and the son of his niece on the other, and delight himself in ministering to their common gratification. Her reply was—"Are you not ashamed to stand here and apologize for slavery?" I have often been reminded of this, by the statements of the Correspondent. If some men do in fact hold slaves, without *brutalizing* them—without shrouding their slaves in ignorance—I have a right to say so. If I have known masters that not only would not prevent parents among their slaves from governing their children, but who even used their influence to make the children respect and honor and obey their parents—I have a right to say it.

Now a few words in reply to the argument of the Correspondent.

1. He maintains that it is an evil *inseparable* from slavery, that it *brutalizes the mind and shrouds the enslaved in ignorance*. To brutalize, is to make brutal. That slavery has exerted such an influence, where masters are cruel, or neglectful of the interests of

their servants, cannot be denied—but the Correspondent maintains that this influence is *inseparable* from slavery; that is, that *every* Christian man that holds slaves, brutalizes them—that he cannot hold them in slavery without brutalizing them. Why, Mr. Editor, it is perfectly palpable to every body acquainted with the state of things in the South, that those who have been in bondage longest, as a *general* thing, are *least brutal*, and that those who have come to the country most *recently*, are, in general, *most* brutal. The Correspondent admits that “many slaves are instructed in the precepts and principles of the gospel, and furnish evidence of piety.” Is brutalizing inseparable from the influence exerted on these many? I do not understand how a *brutalizing*, and converting, and sanctifying process, can go on together in the same persons. He admits that they are taught orally, but then he maintains that they are every one brutalized and enshrouded in ignorance. Suppose I should show the Correspondent a slave that has more grace of manners than the majority of graduates of our colleges, a man that can be trusted by his master to manage a great and complicated business, and to whose care he can safely confide the protection of his wife and daughters, both at home or in journeys, will he say that slavery has brutalized such a man? I can assure the Correspondent that I have had the happiness to know more than one, who is as far from being brutalized, as Joseph was in Egypt, or Daniel in Babylon, by their bondage. And is shrouding the enslaved in ignorance, *inseparable* from slavery? If this means any thing, it means that a man cannot be in a state of slavery, and be taught at the same time.

Shrouding in ignorance is *inseparable* from slavery! Ignorance inseparable from slavery! Were the literati among the Roman slaves ignorant? Was the accomplished Terence made brutal and ignorant by slavery? Yet his master Terentius Lucanus, (who had the power of life and death over him,) gave Terence his elegant education. Plautus, too, one of the purest among the early Latin classics, was born and brought up in slavery. There are also hundreds in the South, that can read, and write, and cast interest. Is being enshrouded in ignorance *inseparable* from a state of bondage? Why, sir, the Correspondent knows from the moment that he reflects on it, that he himself could advance a family of slaves in knowledge every month of their lives, if he held them, even under all the disadvantages of our American slave code.

I deny that *any* master, but a wicked and unprincipled one, brutalizes his servants, or enshrouds them in ignorance. Every Christian man exerts an influence of an opposite character. The assertion that such an influence of brutalizing and enshrouding in ignorance is *inseparable* from slavery, is a cruel accusation against hundreds of excellent Christian men, that are toilsomely and successfully, though slowly, I admit, improving the intellectual and spiritual state of their poor slaves.

Another evil which the Correspondent asserts to be *inseparable* from slavery, is *the unlawful control which slaveholders exercise over the children of the enslaved*. Mr. Editor, I do feel deeply the cut, inflicted by this paragraph of the Correspondent, upon thousands who are unjustly accused by it. If the Correspondent had said that slavery gives a man the *power* to

act thus towards his slaves, I would not have objected. But he maintains that all slaveholders exercise this cruelty—that it is *inseparable* from slavery. The questions propounded are most extraordinary. He refers to the Divine injunction to children to obey their parents, and gravely asks me “if masters do not nullify this command *uniformly*, in the slaveholding States?” Why, he might with as much propriety ask me if masters do not *uniformly* whip their slaves to death in the Southern States.

He asks whether I “will pretend that children are *permitted* to obey their parents as God has enjoined it upon them?” Why sir, the question is as insulting to many of our excellent Christian friends at the South, as it would be to the Correspondent to ask him if he would pretend that he himself permits his children to obey their mother.

There is nothing in slavery that can prevent a Christian master from inculcating every precept of the gospel upon his servants. Every precept is inculcated by the pious. Christian masters require it of the children of their servants, to honour and obey their parents. They often require it of their own children, to obey the servants that have the care of them.—I must here narrate a little incident illustrative of the feelings of many Southern Christians in respect to the deference which they often demand for worthy servants. I procured for a New England gentleman, a young man, the situation of family preceptor, in a respectable family in Louisiana. After a time I inquired of the employer how he liked my young friend. He replied, “Very well, except in one thing; he seems to be a fine scholar, and the children are fond of him.” But, in what particular,

asked I, does he not suit you? "Well," said he, "he does not seem to understand our domestic feelings; he is not exactly as kind as he should be to all the family." How is that? said I, he always seemed to me a man of very bland and amiable manners. "Well," said my friend, "so he is except in a single case. Our servant, old aunt Polly, has grown grey in the service of this family. She has been the mamma [nurse] of all my children, and we never allowed one of them to speak disrespectfully to her. She is an old saint, and we can't bear to see her abused." But what has he done? How does he treat aunt Polly? Very bad? inquired I. "Why, yes," says he, "he orders her about like a child, and asks her what she means by not having his room in order. It grieves her. We always say, please aunt Polly."

Yet, this young man pocketed his \$800 salary, which he had received in addition to his board, and returned to the North, and wrote back a letter to his pastor containing "scorching rebukes" for his not coming out and "reproving the sin of slavery," and that too, when he had remained in the same place a year without "reproving" it himself, or doing anything else bearing on the subject, except to grieve the heart of a pious family by speaking disrespectfully to a servant of excellent character! Do you wonder, Sir, that such a man as that master should speak of abolitionists as "northern fanatics," when he sees in the paper, from the pen of a man of so much standing and character as "the Correspondent," a question like this—"Will he pretend that children are *permitted* to obey their parents as God has enjoined it upon them?" The insinuation that "a child [in

bondage] is not permitted to minister to a parent in sickness, or wipe the cold sweat of death from his brow," is unworthy of the Correspondent. I know he does not say that this is *inseparable* from slavery—but why say, "*If the master chooses* to forbid these last offices of sympathy and affection." Would "the Correspondent" think it kind if one should say of a servant woman in his own family, that a child might not come and minister to her mother in sickness, or wipe the cold sweat of death from her brow, *if* he the Correspondent chooses to forbid these last offices of sympathy and affection? And yet, he ought to know that such an act is as likely to be perpetrated by himself, as by our Christian brethren at the South.

Mr. Editor, I do deeply regret that the Correspondent has not left some opportunity for modifying his statements. But his declaration, that it is "*inseparable*" from slavery, "that slave-holders exercise an unlawful control over the children of the enslaved," and the question (one of the strongest modes of asserting a thing,) do not masters nullify this divine precept *uniformly* in the slave-holding States?" have put it out of his power to explain. He ought, in my opinion, to retract the charge. I know that the Correspondent is kind and charitable in his general character. He can doubtless say, that he has written hastily, that he has been imperceptibly drawn into such modes of speaking by an honest zeal against a hateful institution, but he will not abide by positions of a calumnious character against his Christian brethren. A man may utter language that has all the influence of the basest calumny, without involving himself in the guilt of calumny. So I trust,



and believe it is with the Correspondent. There are hundreds of men, in the South, some of them ministers of the gospel, and elders of our churches, who hold slaves, of whom, I am sure, he will not say on reflection, that it is *inseparable* from *their* slave-holding that they *brutalize* their servants, *enshroud* them in ignorance, or refuse "to permit their children to obey their parents." He means it is inseparable from the slave-holding of very bad men.

I do not allege that the Correspondent is culpable for saying what he has said of Southern men here, but I do say that he *will be* if he do not inform himself of the state of facts. If he fears being *blinded* and *hardened* by going and seeing for himself, let him inquire of those who have as much character as himself, and who have been eye witnesses, and he will learn that the things which he has charged upon *all* slaveholders as *inseparable* from slavery, and as being *uniformly* practiced, are, like sin, everywhere else, practiced only by wicked men. Slavery is a great evil. Mr. Monroe, and Mr. Jefferson, and thousands of others among slave-holders do not think too badly of it. But, there are other evils. Among them, there is perhaps none more dangerous than the spirit of detraction. We look to good men like the Correspondent to counteract its influence.

When the Correspondent brings forward *one* evil that is inseparable from slavery that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations, I will promise cheerfully to retract my position.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.

[MR. ROOD.]

TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—My opponent ought surely by this time to be convinced, that I make a wide distinction between the *system of slavery*, and those Christian brethren who feel its ponderous weight, and are struggling amidst the difficulties with which they are environed, to do the best they can in their unfortunate position. I have not uttered an unkind word in regard to them, but uniformly in this discussion expressed the sympathy which I sincerely feel for them, in their trying and difficult circumstances. "Meridionus" might have saved much time and strength which he has expended in his last communication, in defence of brethren at the South, if he had called into exercise a reasonable share of discrimination, so as to have gained a clear apprehension of the positions, which I endeavored to establish. As it is, he has certainly missed the mark in most that he has said. It will be recollected, that he called on me to specify "*barely one*" evil that is inseparable from slavery. I responded to this by saying, "one evil inseparable from slavery is *brutalizing the mind, and shrouding the enslaved in ignorance.*" I admitted "that many slaves are instructed in the precepts and principles of the Gospel, and furnish evidence of piety." I knew full well that many Christian masters are careful and conscientious in imparting knowledge to their servants, and this is clear-



ly implied in the remark, "that *many* slaves are instructed." Who did "Meridionus" suppose I intended as giving such instruction, but pious masters? But such instances, and I rejoice there are so many, are *exceptions* to the general rule. Where there is one master, who labors for the intellectual and moral culture of his servants, are there not ten, fifteen, or twenty, who are indifferent or hostile to their mental improvement? Let us look at some facts, and see if my position, which my opponent represents as untrue and slanderous, is not fully sustained.

"A law of South Carolina, passed in 1800, authorizes the infliction of twenty lashes on any slave found in an assembly convened for the purpose of MENTAL INSTRUCTION, held in a confined or secret place, although in the presence of a white. Another law imposes a fine of one hundred dollars on any person who may *teach a slave to write*. An act of Virginia, of 1829, declares every meeting of slaves, at any school, by day or night, for *instruction in reading or writing*, an unlawful assembly; and any justice may inflict twenty lashes on each slave found in such school."

How slanderous it is, to say that slavery brutalizes the mind, and keeps its victims in ignorance! But I have not done yet. In North Carolina, "to teach a slave to *read or write*, or to sell or give him *any* book, (the Bible not excepted,) or pamphlet, may be punished with thirty-nine lashes, or imprisonment, if the offender be a free negro; but if a white, then with a fine of two hundred dollars." Would the reader know why this severity for an act which would be commended in a free State? The preamble to the law assigns the reason. Mark it, my good friend,

“Meridionus,” ponder, and inwardly digest it—  
“*Teaching slaves to read and write, tends to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion.*” A law was enacted in Georgia, in 1829, to wit, “If a white teach a free negro or slave to read or write, he shall be fined five hundred dollars, and imprisoned at the discretion of the court; if the offender be a colored man, bond or free, he shall be fined or whipped at the discretion of the court.” In Louisiana, the penalty on the statute book, if it has not been recently repealed, for teaching slaves to read or write, is one year’s imprisonment.

I pass now to the testimony of ecclesiastical bodies. The Synod of Kentucky have recorded their testimony as follows: “Slavery dooms thousands of human beings to hopeless ignorance. Throughout the State, so far as we can learn, there is but one school in which, during the week, slaves can be taught. Here and there a family is found, where humanity and religion impel the master, mistress, or children, to the laborious task of private instruction. But after all, what is the utmost amount of instruction given to slaves? Those who enjoy the most of it, are fed but with the crumbs of knowledge which fall from their master’s table. The impression is almost universal,” (mark it, my good friend,) “that intellectual elevation unfits men for servitude, and *renders it impossible to retain them in this condition.* Hence, in some of our States, laws have been enacted, prohibiting, under severe penalties, the instruction of the blacks; and even where such laws do not exist, there are *formidable numbers, who oppose with deep hostility every effort to enlighten the mind of the*

*negro.*" Had the Synod of Kentucky any doubt in regard to the brutalizing influence of slavery?

The Rev. Dr. Nelson, born and educated in Tennessee, and till forty years old a slaveholder, says. "I have been asked concerning the religious instruction of slaves; and I feel safe in answering, that in general it amounts to little or nothing. Hundreds and thousands never heard of a Savior; and of those who are familiar with his name, few have any comprehension of its meaning. I remember one grey-headed negro, with whom I tried to talk concerning his immortal soul. I pointed to the hills, and told him God made them. He said he did not believe anybody made the hills. I asked another slave about Jesus Christ. I found he had heard his name, but he thought he was the son of the Governor of Kentucky."

The Rev. Charles C. Jones preached a sermon, in 1831, before two associations of planters in Georgia, in which he says: "Generally speaking, the slaves appear to us to be without God and without hope in the world—A NATION OF HEATHENS in our very midst. We cannot cry out against the Papists for withholding the Scriptures from the common people, and keeping them in ignorance of the way of life; for we *withhold* the Bible from our servants, and *keep* them in ignorance of it, while we *will not* use the means to have it read and explained to them. The cry of our perishing servants comes up to us from the sultry plains, as they bend to their toil—it comes up to us from their humble cottages, when they return at evening to rest their weary limbs—it comes up to us from the midst of their ignorance, and superstition, and adultery and lewdness." And yet, "*there is not*

*one evil in slavery, that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other LAWFUL RELATIONS.*" "Meridionus" holds on to this, as if it were his life.

In 1833, the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia made the following record: "From long continued and close observation, we believe that the moral and religious condition of slaves is such, that they may justly be considered the *heathen* of this Christian country, and will bear comparison with heathen in any country in the world." Why does not my opponent reprove these *Southern* brethren for "*detraction*," which he justly represents as a crying sin! I think if I am arraigned on this charge, I shall be found in a very numerous and respectable company. A correspondent of the *Church Advocate*, published at the time in Kentucky, says: "The poor negroes are left in the ways of spiritual darkness—no efforts are being made for their enlightenment—no seed is being sown in this portion of the Lord's vineyard—here nothing but a moral wilderness is seen, over which the soul sickens, and the heart of Christian sympathy bleeds. Here nothing is presented but a moral waste, as extensive as our influence, as appalling as the valley of death." If my limits would permit, I could furnish a mass of additional testimony of the same general bearing.

Now, my opponent is bound to do one of two things: either to show that this testimony is *irrelevant* or *untrue*, or *admit that my position is fully sustained*. I shall not accept general statements of denial, or be diverted from the point at issue by the charge of "*detraction*." "*Meridionus*" *must meet, and set aside this testimony, or confess that he is wrong, and that I am*

*right.*" It is preposterous for a man who has resided in Richmond, or Charleston, or New Orleans, and mingled with refined and genteel circles, to pretend that he has seen slavery *as it is*, and is qualified to give a fair representation of its atrocities, as they are generally exhibited.

A writer in the Charleston (S. C.) *Observer* said : " Let us establish missionaries among our own negroes, who, in view of religious knowledge, are as debasingly ignorant as any one on the coast of Africa ; for I hazard the assertion, that throughout the bounds of our Synod, there are at least one hundred thousand slaves, speaking the same language as ourselves, who never *heard* of the plan of salvation by a Redeemer." The Editor, instead of contradicting this broad assertion, adds : " We fully concur with what our correspondent has said, respecting the benighted heathen among ourselves."

With testimony like this, and a great amount of similar character, the conviction is forced upon my mind, that the knowledge of my opponent, of the customs and usages of the South, is extremely limited and superficial. I do not believe that he intentionally misrepresents the state of things there. Certainly not. He is a man of character, and conscience, and truth. But he is mistaken, and does not understand the things whereof he affirms. In his zeal for the South, he has lost sight of his usual discretion, and committed himself to the defence of positions, which every body must see are utterly untenable.

My second specification of the evils inseparable from slavery, respects the " unlawful control which slave-holders exercise over the children of the en-

slaved." My opponent professes to be deeply grieved by this representation. He says, "I do feel deeply the cut, inflicted by this paragraph of the Correspondent, upon thousands who are unjustly accused by it."

The Rev. Mr. Barnes in his admirable work on slavery, sustains by a triumphant argument, the views I have expressed. He says, "Slavery interferes with the natural right which a father has over his children. This results from the nature of *property* implied in the relation. The primary and the controlling notion is, that the child is *owned* by the master, not that he is placed under the control and authority of his father. The master, not the father, is supreme. . . . The father is displaced from the position where God has assigned him, and the master is substituted in his place . . . Children, *all* children are to honor their father and mother, are to obey their parents *in all things*, Ex. 20 : 12, Col. 3 : 20. "Now it is impossible," says Mr. Barnes, "to secure the discharge of these duties under the system of slavery. The father's own time is not at his disposal ; he is at liberty to select and appoint no hours when he will instruct his children ; he has no right to designate any time when he will even *pray* with his family ; and the whole business of 'providing for his own,' is entirely taken out of his hands. . . . 'The law of God is perhaps still more entirely nullified in regard to the duty which the child owes to its parent. Here it is impossible for him to obey the command of God requiring subjection to his parent, if the will of the master comes in conflict with his. It is not designed that *the father* shall be obeyed. The master has the absolute authority, and has the right to coun-



teract any of the requirements of the father. . . . . The spirit of the whole institution is, not that the *father* is to be obeyed, but the master; and if the father is *not* obeyed, the law lends no help to secure the respect and obedience of the child. The law has displaced the father from the position which *God* gave him, and has substituted the authority of another."

I asked a gentleman born and educated at the South if my statement was not supported by facts? He replied, it could not be contradicted that masters have the absolute control of the children of the enslaved—that they could sell them, and in all respects, when the wishes of the master and those of the parent come in conflict, the will of the master is paramount. I can produce any amount of testimony confirming this statement. "Meridionus" will not deny that the laws on this subject are decidedly wrong and shield unprincipled masters in the practice of flagrant enormities. I did not say that *Christian* masters used the power lodged in their hands as they are authorized to use it. I was speaking of the *wrongfulness* of THE SYSTEM OF SLAVERY. I admit most freely, that there are many kind, humane masters, who are striving to do the best they can in the circumstances in which they are placed. But the *system* in its spirit and general operation is hostile to the great principles of charity and Christian benevolence, and naturally and almost necessarily leads the masters to assume prerogatives in respect to the children of the enslaved, which are the exclusive privilege of parents. I see no reason, therefore, to recall what I said on this point. My language was sufficiently guarded. I spoke of the *uniform*, not the *universal* practice of slave-holders. The case of "aunt Polly" does not, in my judgment,

require any modification of my statement. She was a very good woman, I have no doubt, and had a very kind master, but this has very little to do with the system of slavery in its general operation.

My third specification of the evils of slavery was this, to wit: "While the system is maintained, masters *cannot render to their servants that which is just and equal*. The nature of the system forbids this on the broad scale which Christianity requires." Not a word of reply is made to this position. I shall take it for granted, therefore, that this point is conceded. I rejoice in this fresh proof of the honesty and integrity of my opponent. He is too conscientious to deny the truth, although it bears with tremendous power against himself. I am greatly encouraged by this feature of the candor and self-sacrificing spirit which he has exhibited. He is determined to carry out the principle,

"Fiat justitia, ruat coelum,"

whatever may be the fate of his theories and positions. This is right, and it will command and secure the respect of all intelligent, honorable men. Henceforth, it will be understood that all our discussions will be conducted on the conceded point that "while the system of slavery is maintained, *masters cannot render to their servants that which is just and equal*."

I will notice one or two other points before I close. "Meridionus" says, "Suppose I should show the Correspondent a slave that has more grace of manners than the majority of graduates of our colleges, a man that can be trusted by his master to manage a great and complicated business, and to whose care he can safely confide the protection of his wife and daugh-



ters," &c. My opponent wishes to know if I regard such a man as brutalized? Perhaps not. But this I will say, to wit:—I think it is a burning shame to hold such a man as a "chattel personal," and put him up in the market like a brute beast. I should be *ashamed* to treat a man of such capabilities with such indignity and glaring injustice. "Meridionus" endeavors to shift a fair inference from a position he had laid down so as to make me responsible for it. This is not exactly a just method of conducting an argument. He said, "if he [the master] rules with the gentleness and benevolence of a perfectly holy being, yet if he rules absolutely over his servant, the essential elements of slavery are there." I replied to this, that "good men and angels are under the absolute control of God; but according to this doctrine, instead of being the 'freemen of the Lord,' they are bond-slaves. An argument that leads to such revolting conclusions is worse than a mere abstraction. I leave our readers to give it a name." And now forsooth, he charges the abominable doctrine on me that God must be a slave-holder, because he says, no "man can deny, with the least show of plausibility, that slave-holders do exercise absolute power." This is going a little farther than I can patiently endure. The statement of "Meridionus" that "if the master rules with the gentleness and benevolence of a perfectly holy being, yet if he rules absolutely over his servant, the essential elements of slavery are there," is preposterous and absurd. In showing its absurdity, it will not do for him to attempt to fasten an inference upon me which is chargeable exclusively upon *his own* unwarranted position. I will, in a word, place this matter in its true light. Christ is "Head

over all things to the Church." He is King in Zion, and rules supremely and absolutely over his people. But are the "essential elements of slavery" there? No, verily, for "whom the Son maketh free, he is free indeed." The absolute control of Christ insures perfect liberty. But there is another kind of absolute control which comprises "the elements of slavery" in all their terrific forms. This is exercised by the "Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." He leads his servants "captive at his will," and binds them with chains of eternal fire. He is the great SLAVEHOLDER of the universe, and good men like "Meridionus" ought to be very cautious not to enlarge his vast dominion, or increase his cruel power.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

[DR. PARKER.]

*ARE THE EVILS OF SLAVERY INSEPARABLE FROM IT?*

MR. EDITOR:—It is not improbable that many of your readers may be weary of the controversy between myself and “the Correspondent.” It is but right that my opponent should speak last in the debate. I will therefore take such a course in this article as shall give him a fair opportunity to close the discussion, on the following week. I shall not reply again, unless strongly urged by the nature of the Correspondent’s next communication.

I consider that there are two questions of great consequence, in respect to the moral right or wrong of slavery. One is, Has a State a right to make and sustain such a system of laws as exist in the Southern part of our confederacy? The other is, Is it right for *an individual* to retain a human being in bondage? With the first question, I have had nothing to do in this discussion. I have raised no inquiry with respect to the duty of any political organization as such.

I have spoken only on the question of the moral character of the individual slave-holder. I have maintained that a man’s holding slaves does not imply that he is living in sin—that if he is guilty of wrong towards his servants, he is not *necessarily* guilty—that it is possible for him to discharge his duty towards his servants in such a way that he shall have as clear a conscience towards them and towards God,

as a good parent can have in respect to his children. I admit that servants are more liable to be wronged by their masters than children are by their parents, but I maintain that the *wronging of servants* is not *inseparable* from holding them in bondage.

This position the Correspondent has undertaken to disprove. He allows, indeed, that a man may hold *the legal relation while making arrangements to emancipate*, or at the request of his servants for protection, and that in such a case he is not guilty, because he is not a *voluntary* slave-holder. I admit the justness of his distinction here.

But on *this point*, (and this is the *only* point) he joins issue with me. He maintains that one man's holding another in bondage is *prima facie* evidence that he is a wicked man—that a man cannot hold a slave voluntarily (that is without any purpose of emancipating him,) and not inflict upon his slave grievous wrongs.

Now, let it be observed, that all that the Correspondent has said on the *system* and the *laws* has no relevancy to the subject.

Nearly all his arguments have gone to prove either, that the State has made laws that oppress the slave, or that bad masters use their servants cruelly. In his last communication but one, it is true, he came to the point and met it fairly.—He undertook to prove that the following evils were *inseparable* from holding slaves. That all *real voluntary* slave-holders are guilty of these wrongs.

1. They are guilty of *brutalizing their slaves, and enshrouding them in ignorance.*

2. *They uniformly exercise an unlawful control over the children of the enslaved.*

3. *That they are guilty of not rendering to their slaves that which is just and equal.*

Let it be remembered, that these statements are made, not respecting men that are peculiarly cruel and unprincipled. The question is not whether bad men treat their slaves badly—these are the things which he maintains are *inseparable* from slavery—the things of which masters at the South are *uniformly* guilty. Now, I assert that there are many hundreds of slave-holders—I mean *voluntary* slave-holders—men who have inherited plantations stocked with slaves—who have no plan for emancipating, but who expect to transmit them to their heirs, and yet they are excellent Christian men, and are not guilty of one of the sins specified. They do *not brutalize* one of their servants. They do *not enshroud* one in ignorance. They do *not exercise an unlawful control* over the children of the slaves, or *refuse to permit them to obey their own parents*. They do not hesitate to obey the Apostle's injunction, to render to them what is just and equal.

I assert that the Correspondent has not substantiated these charges, and for proof, I refer the reader to his communication of February 5th. He has made the charges there, but without proof that can satisfy any thinking mind. If he had said that unprincipled men do these things, and that the State is culpable for permitting it—for not restraining them—it would be a different thing; but he maintains that these things are *inseparable* from holding slaves—and that Southern slave-masters are *uniformly* guilty of them.

Mr. Editor, I am glad that the views of the Correspondent are before the public. I only ask that his arguments, so far as they relate to the subject, may

be looked at, and that our readers will remember, that all he has said of slave laws, and of the cruelty of cruel masters, has nothing to do with any question between us ; and that so far as such representations have a tendency to draw men's minds away from the point—as if he were opposing slavery, as a system, and I were its advocate—they are palpably unjust. The power of reproof is a mighty power, in removing great systems of wrong—but nothing is more mischievous in its influence, than *misplaced censure*. It is misplaced, in my opinion ; and the bitterest evils are inflicted, when *all* slave-holders are accused of the *three wrongs* specified by the Correspondent.

The closing allusion, in the Correspondent's last communication, to Satan as a slave-holder, if it were of any consequence, might be retorted. Satan has no *involuntary* servants. He is an abolitionist, and an "accuser of the brethren."

O. R. MERIDIONUS.

[MR. ROOD.]

TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—There are but two or three points in the *last* communication of my opponent, which require notice. I shall dispose of these with great brevity. I am not surprised he should enter his caveat against being regarded as the apologist and defender of slavery. I have not charged this great wrong upon him. I have examined the *principles* and *positions* he has laid down, and left our readers to draw their own inferences. One thing is quite certain, to wit, the *subversion* of the system of slavery does not enter into his plan. Hear what he says: "I assert that there are many hundreds of slaveholders, I mean *voluntary* slaveholders, men who have inherited plantations stocked with slaves, who have no plan of emancipating, but who expect to transmit them to their heirs; and yet they are excellent Christian men, and are not guilty of one of the sins specified." Well, if this be so, the system will be perpetuated without doubt. And if *voluntary* slaveholders can be excellent Christian men, and have no *plan of emancipating*, and no desire to emancipate, but continue to transmit their slaves to their heirs—it is all the system needs, to defend it from the assaults of its opponents. Did "Meridionus" see the bearing of this paragraph, when he penned it? Did he reflect on the necessary inference it suggests, in regard to his estimate of the system of sla-



very ? My views of the system have been freely and frankly expressed, and I cheerfully submit them to the judgment of our readers. In respect to the retort, that "Satan has no involuntary servants; that he is an abolitionist, and an accuser of the brethren"—I have one or two inquiries to make. Abolitionists, whether their views are right or wrong, insist upon emancipation, as a fundamental principle of their creed. But when or where has Satan done anything to strike off the chains of servitude, and give liberty to his captives ? What continent, kingdom, island, or tribe, has been blest by his agency ? "An accuser of the brethren !" True, indeed, he is. But they are such men as Wilberforce and Clarkson, and their co-adjutors, who have fought manfully the battle of human rights. But I must not dwell on these things. I have a more important object to accomplish in this communication.

My opponent has laid down two or three positions, which are such precious specimens of logic and learning, that I feel bound to invite the special attention of our readers to their consideration. They are the following : "*Slavery is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated. The slaves are one party, the masters are the other.*" "*Slave-holding is the exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances.*" "*What are the evils of slavery ? There is not one that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other lawful relations.*" I have said something of these positions before, but they deserve a more distinct and formal notice. If true, they throw a flood of light upon the world, and ought to be proclaimed with trumpet-tongue to all the habitations of men. If true, they

amount to nothing less than a quick and easy method of banishing all sin from the universe. We have all been groping in the dark. We have been laboring in the slow way which the Gospel points out, to get rid of moral evil. Slavery has long been regarded by multitudes as a great evil and a great sin, and many prayers have been offered up for the subversion of the system. But if my opponent represents it truly, it is far from being the hideous enormity which men have supposed. "It is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated." Apply this to other things, and how differently do they appear from what we had vainly imagined! Idolatry, for instance—what is that? It is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated. The idolaters are one party—the idols are the other. Our missionaries tell us of infanticide and patricide, and the burning of widows, and the self-tortures of devotees. But if "Meridionus" is right in his philosophy, these are not "part and parcel of the thing." They are only "circumstances that may be separated from" idolatry. Point out one that cannot. Cannot infanticide?—There are thousands of heathen parents, who do not murder their children. Cannot patricide? The Chinese are exceedingly kind to their parents. Cannot the burning of widows? Are not the British abolishing this in India? Cannot the self-tortures of devotees? Many of the heathen do not practice them.

Take another example. What is drunkenness? Much has been said about it, of late years, but with how little relevancy, the definition of "Meridionus" will show. It would have saved Dr. Beecher a great part of his labor, in writing his celebrated "Six Ser-

mons," if he had apprehended that drunkenness is nothing more than "a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated." The drunkards are one party, the manufacturers and venders of intoxicating drinks are the other. Let not Messrs. Barnes, and Chambers, and Brainerd, and Thompson, publish addresses, and make speeches, about the evils of intemperance. Away, gentlemen, with your stories about the crimes induced by intemperance; the misery and pauperism, and orphans and widows, that follow in its train. These are not "part and parcel of the thing." They are only "circumstances which may be separated from it." Which of them cannot? Have not men been drunkards, without committing robbery or murder? Have not men filled drunkards' graves, who had no widows or orphans to leave behind? And what is robbery? Mr. Webster defines it to be, "the forcible and felonious taking of money, goods, &c." The law books speak of it in the same way. But they have committed an egregious blunder. "It is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated." The robber is one party, the man robbed is the other. There are, it is true, many circumstances connected with robbery, which we may unite in deploring, and wishing they were otherwise, "almost as much as the robbers do themselves:" Such are, the forcible entrance into houses, the alarming of families, the tying them in their beds, or standing over them with loaded pistols, and taking away from them their means of support. But these are not "part and parcel of the thing." Which of them cannot be separated from it? Cannot the entering into houses? Certainly it can. A man may be knocked down on the street, and robbed.

Cannot the tying them in bed, or standing over them with loaded pistols? Undoubtedly. Cannot the taking away the means of their support? Assuredly. Many a family has been robbed of much valuable plate and jewelry, who still had enough to live upon.\*

The slave-trade, what is that? It has been pronounced piracy, and is punished as such. But after all, if the position of Meridionus is sound, it is a mere "term by which the relation of two parties is indicated." The captured Africans are one party, the traders in human flesh are the other. It is not denied that there are some unhappy circumstances connected with this branch of business. Such is the tearing asunder of family ties on the coast of Africa; the confining them in the hold of the slave-ship in such numbers; the want of pure air and wholesome food, and of space to stand erect, or even to lie. But these are not "part and parcel of the thing," as Wilberforce and Clarkson supposed. Is it not plain that these circumstances may every one of them be separated from the trade? Cannot the sundering of family bonds on the coast of Africa? Certainly, by taking the whole family. Cannot the crowded hold? Yes: by simply carrying a smaller number. Cannot the want of wholesome food? No one will deny it. Thus, by a stroke we get rid of most of the evils in the world, and why not the whole? Cannot the thing be exhibited to the universal conviction of mankind by a series of syllogisms! Thus:—

\* Does my opponent say that Idolatry, and Drunkenness, and Robbery, are *sins per se*? And is not the *system of Slavery* one of fraud, injustice, and cruel oppression, abhorrent to God and to all right-minded men?

There is no sin in abstract terms.

Slavery is an abstract term ;

Therefore there is no sin in slavery.

There is no sin in abstract terms.

Idolatry is an abstract term ;

Therefore there is no sin in idolatry.

But it seems that *slave-holding* is not exactly the same thing that slavery is. Still it is an abstraction, and a very harmless one.—Hear Meridionus. “Slave-holding is the exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances.”—Such is the divine government, such is the parental, and such are all human governments. There is nothing wrong in this surely. The views of Washington and Jefferson, and Patrick Henry, and John Jay, and Wm. Pinkney, of the abominations of slave-holding are all exploded. It is clear they did not understand the nature of the subject. They only knew it in the concrete; we in the abstract. They looked at it only in its actual workings; we “treat it ethically.”

But query;—would not this definition apply to the matters we have considered above, and thus doubly fortify the position we have taken in regard to them? Would it not apply to the slave-trade? Is not that the “exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances?” Would it not apply to highway robbery? Is not that the “exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances?” Would it not apply to murder? Is not that the “exercising of a power of one mind over another absolutely, and in certain circumstances?” Now, let us frame another syllogism, and see how the matter will stand.

The exercising of a power of one mind over another  
absolutely,

And in certain circumstances, is not sin.

But the slave-trader, the robber, and the murderer  
exercise such a power absolutely in certain  
circumstances ;

Therefore, the slave-trade, robbery and murder are  
not sins.

But it is acknowledged that there are some circumstances connected with each of these things which are evils, and which it would be desirable to get rid of. Well, so far as the evils of slavery are concerned, Meridionus finds but little difficulty. Hear him. —“ *There is not one evil in slavery that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in OTHER LAWFUL RELATIONS.*” We have then but to look at other lawful relations to see how little trouble any one need give himself in regard to the continuance and extension of the system. The marriage relation, and the parental, are lawful relations, but slavery is just as innocent as they are, and there is not one evil connected with it that is not equally inseparable from either of them. How foolish and wicked it would be to abolish the marriage relation on account of the evils that are at present connected with it ! And equally foolish and wicked is it to wish to do away with slavery, which is a lawful relation, and very good with the exception of some circumstances which are not “part and parcel of the thing.” So also, partners in business sustain lawful relations, but according to the doctrine of Meridionus, there is “not one evil in slavery that is not equally inseparable” from all business partnerships. Pastors and their churches sustain lawful relations, but according to my opponent, “there is not one evil in slavery that is

not equally inseparable" from the relation of pastor and people. The American Board unites many friends of missions in lawful relations, but Meridionus stakes his reputation as a logician and Christian philosopher on the asseveration that there is not one evil in slavery that is not equally inseparable from the American Board.

His argument seems to be this :—there is nothing wrong in slavery itself. It is, divested of a few circumstances, morally good and excellent. It is in harmony with Christianity and the law of love; and so it seems that the toiling captives are to breathe the pure atmosphere of the millennial morning. Let no one say, these are unwarranted and unjust inferences. I ask any man to look at the positions Meridionus has laid down, especially the *last*, on which I have commented, and pass judgment between us. I never sought this controversy, or anticipated being drawn into it, but forced to defend myself, I have done it with what leisure from pressing duties I could command.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.



[DR. PARKER.]

REPLY TO THE "CORRESPONDENT," &c.

MR. EDITOR:—I intimated to you in my last that I should not reply to the Correspondent again, unless strongly urged by the nature of his next communication.

The chief thing that induces me to take up my pen again, is the fact that the Correspondent has chosen to invite it by going back to a ground once passed over in respect to the use of the term slavery. It seems to trouble him very greatly that the word should be regarded as expressive of any sort of relationship between two parties. I have replied to his remarks about a "*term*" before, but it seems he is not satisfied, though, I have no doubt, he was completely satisfied at the time. Let it not be forgotten then that I defined the word *slavery* in the following language, viz. :—" *Slavery is a term by which the relation of two parties is indicated. The slaves are one party, the masters are the other. The State is not a party in the relation. A State may hold slaves, but in the condition of things of which we speak, in this country, individual citizens hold slaves. But, whoever may hold slaves, slavery is neither 'a right' nor 'an assumed right,' nor 'a claimed right.' Slavery as expressive of the condition of the subordinate party, is the absolute subjection of slaves to their masters. Whether it is consistent with their rights that they should be under this subjection or not is a distinct question.*

*Slaves are in absolute subjection to their masters. Slavery as expressive of the condition of the superior party, is the holding of slaves, the exercising of the power that keeps them in absolute subjection. Whether it be right for a master to hold slaves in absolute subjection is a distinct question."*

This is the question between us. I maintain that there *may* be—that there *are* many excellent Christian men that hold slaves, who yet are not guilty of the sins which the Correspondent charges on all voluntary slaveholders.

Now, how has the Correspondent met this plain account of slavery? Not by pointing out any one thing left out of this description as a thing necessarily belonging to slavery. Not by showing that anything is included in the definition that does not always belong to slavery? Nothing of the kind. He has intimated that I have represented slavery as being nothing but "*a term.*" Instead of showing that the relation between the two parties is not fairly described, or that the relation implies injustice in one of the parties, he affects to treat the whole matter as if a relation between two parties could be of no sort of consequence. Why does he not show that *every* man that holds slaves is guilty of a wrong? He compares the holding of slaves with "*Idolatry,*" and "*Drunkenness*" and "*Robbery*" and "*Murder,*" and maintains that the evils that belong to these are "*part and parcel of the thing,*" and that just so the evils incidental to slavery are "*part and parcel of the thing.*"

He then challenges me to point out *one* evil that cannot be separated from "*Idolatry.*" So he asks of Drunkenness and "*Robbery,*" and "*Murder.*" Why,

Mr. Editor, what can the Correspondent intend by such questions? I am afraid some of your readers will think that I am writing in the name of the Correspondent, and asking these questions to bring his cause into contempt. The inquiries so plainly demand an answer directly over against the Correspondent's argument, that it reminds one of the parody on Phillips.—“The Flagrant and Chromatic tea, does it not come from Africa? And the coffee, does it not come from China?” Let me assure you, Mr. Editor, that I have had nothing to do knowingly with leading the Correspondent to place himself in such an attitude before his readers. What one sin cannot be separated from idolatry? This is his question in effect. Why the worshiping of false gods cannot be separated from it. Does the Correspondent wish proof that such worship is wicked?

What sin cannot be separated from drunkenness!—why, the sin of drunkenness. What from robbery and murder! Why the sin of robbing and murdering. These are all crimes in themselves—always crimes.

Idolatry is the violation of the first commandment directly. Drunkenness, we are expressly told by revelation, excludes from heaven. “Nor drunkards shall enter into the kingdom of God.” Robbery is forbidden in the law which says, Thou shalt not steal; and murder is opposed to the prohibition which says, “Thou shalt do no murder.” There is no law, nor precept, that prohibits the holding of a slave—yet the Garrison School put these things on the same footing.

In conclusion, I beg leave to call the attention of the Correspondent to a few of his positions.

He maintains that slavery is not a sin *per se*, and yet that it is "*intrinsically wrong*." He says, "The doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful, is untrue, and has done a vast amount of mischief." Yet he maintains, that "Slavery is, whenever a human being, without *crime alleged*, is robbed of his inalienable rights;" that it is "a bartering away rights which the law of God never gave to man," and that it ought to be "*denounced as intrinsically wrong, oppressive, and wicked*." Which of these contradictory statements would he have his readers believe?

He alleges that "*some, perhaps one in a hundred, or in a thousand, hold slaves in harmony with the great law of love*." Yet "slavery is when a man is robbed of his inalienable rights"—and that the relation of slavery is "*unlawful and oppressive*." He says, that "some hold slaves in harmony with the law of love." And yet, in the case of the slaveholder, "you must bring him away from the influence of slavery, before he *can in all respects*, if I may so speak, fulfil the law of love." May so speak! He may speak in any language he chooses, but he cannot require of his readers to be so stupid, as not to see the contradiction of such statements.

He says, "I do not deny that cruelty of treatment, where it exists, may be corrected." Yet he maintains that *all* slave-holders are guilty of *brutalizing* their slaves, and *enshrouding* them in ignorance—that they "*uniformly*" exercise an unlawful control over the children of the enslaved, and that they are guilty of cruelty, withholding from their poor slaves "*that which is just and equal*."

These cruelties, he admits, *may be corrected*—yet he avers that they are *inseparable* from holding slaves,

and that Southern masters are "uniformly" guilty of them. He says that the doctrine that slavery is *per se* sinful, is untrue—but that "the *system* of slavery is a sin *per se*." What? The *holding of slaves* is not a sin *per se*, and the *system* of slavery is a sin *per se*. The system of slavery is a sin *per se*!! Who perpetrates it? This is really one of the last discoveries that have been made. It is not the giving a local habitation or a name to a new planet—but it is discovering a new sin. It ought to be put down in the list of crimes, something like this—felony, arson, murder, "the system of slavery," drunkenness, and such like. But who commits this sin? For it is a sin *per se*. Not the slave-holder, for the Correspondent informs us that holding slaves is *not a sin per se*. Who is guilty of the system? Somebody must be chargeable with it. Not one who defends a Christian slave-holder, with whom "cruelties are corrected." Not one who condemns such a man as is in an "unlawful and oppressive relation." He may be "an accuser of the brethren," but he has not committed that great sin *per se*—the *system of slavery*. Who has committed the system of slavery? The sinner ought to be known. The Correspondent will do well to remember the predicament of a certain judge who, when presiding at a public Sunday School meeting, and seeing a particular word, intended to guide him in respect to the order of the performances, called out with a very sonorous voice, "Mr. ANTHEM will now favor us with an address." Scholars ought not to make such a mistake, as to ascribe to an *inanimate thing*, what belongs only to a moral being.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.

[MR. ROOD.]

TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—My opponent in this discussion is fully apprised that he has laid down one position especially, which I regard as most unwarranted, and of injurious practical tendency. All his statements and arguments, in support of his side of the question, are of very little importance, as I view the subject, compared with the repeated asseveration, that "*There is not one evil of slavery that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other LAWFUL RELATIONS.*" In my last article, I resolved to bring him to the defence of this position, or constrain him to abandon it. It will be borne in mind by our readers, that while he has reiterated this statement directly and indirectly, in his communications, he has not attempted to adduce the arguments which are indispensable to sustain it. I was anxious that this thing should be met frankly and fearlessly, and prepared my last article with the design of compelling him to defend his position, by all the arguments within his power. I must beg the privilege of repeating what I said, that our readers may have a distinct apprehension of my earnest endeavors to prevail upon him to exhibit all his logic and ability in defending a position, which I regard as untenable, and deeply injurious to the rights of man. I remarked as follows :

"We have then but to look at other lawful relations, to

see how little trouble any one need give himself, in regard to the continuance and extension of the system. The marriage relation, and the parental, are lawful relations, but slavery is just as innocent as they are, and there is not one evil connected with it, that is not equally inseparable from either of them. How foolish and wicked it would be to abolish the marriage relation, on account of the evils that are at present connected with it! And equally foolish and wicked is it, to wish to do away with slavery, which is a lawful relation, and very good, with the exception of some circumstances which are not 'part and parcel of the thing.' So also, partners in business sustain lawful relations, but according to the doctrine of 'Meridionus,' there is 'not one equally inseparable' from all business partnerships. Pastors and their churches sustain lawful relations, but according to my opponent, 'there is not one evil in slavery, that is not equally inseparable' from the relation of pastor and people. The American Board unites many friends of missions in lawful relations, but 'Meridionus' stakes his reputation as a logician and Christian philosopher, on the asseveration, that 'there is not one evil in slavery, that is not equally inseparable' from the American Board."

Now, it is too much to suppose that these remarks should have escaped the notice of my opponent—and I presume they will not be regarded as so entirely irrelevant, that they did not merit a reply. And yet there is no allusion to them in the communication of "Meridionus"; *not a word uttered in approbation or condemnation*. If he is satisfied with this course, it does not become me to complain. If he is willing to stand before the Christian community, as responsible for such a position, without girding himself to its defence, he has a right to do so. I do not believe, however, he will find a very large number, either in the free or the slave States, who will be willing to stand by his side. In proof, I mention one fact among many I might record. I asked a distinguished gentleman, who was born, bred, and still resides, in a



slave-holding community, his views of this position of my opponent. He promptly replied, "It is preposterous—there are none, save those who *deal in human flesh*, who would defend such a statement."

"Let me assure you, Mr. Editor, that I have had nothing to do, knowingly, with leading 'Meridionus' to place himself in such an attitude before his readers."

I pass now to a brief consideration of my *alleged* inconsistencies and contradictions. I am represented, in effect, as having thrown together a "jumble of things," so that "confusion is worse confounded." I hope to be able to show, in a few paragraphs, that my contradictions are not so numerous or palpable as "Meridionus" would have our readers believe. In speaking of the *system of slavery*, I have represented it as one of fraud, oppression, and injustice. Nor have I been "so stupid" as to suppose that this system is sustained and perpetuated without the agency of intelligent, responsible men. "Who is guilty of the system?" asks my opponent. I answer, the great mass of those who advocate and sustain it. The sin lies at their door—and the day of inquisition will disclose the flagrant injustice and wrongs of which they are chargeable. But is every individual who is involved in the evil workings of this system, worthy of condemnation? I have answered this inquiry in language as explicit as follows: "The laws of slave-holding States force good men into a position which they deplore and abhor. They are restrained from acting out the promptings of their humane, benevolent feelings, by unrighteous and oppressive legislation. Now, if they do the best they can, in their circumstances; if they remonstrate and petition for

a change of those laws which environ them with difficulties ; *if they truly desire to give freedom to their bondsmen* ; then I say they are not chargeable with the guilt of oppression. Their condition is most unfortunate ; but it is not one that deserves censure." I have in the course of this discussion, again and again, expressed similar views. The case of the slave Tom, which I mentioned as an illustration of my views, will be remembered. His master resolved to bring him to a free State, and give him his liberty. He remonstrated on account of his wife, who was owned by another person, from whom he must be separated. His master said to him, make your own arrangements, then, and receive all your wages for your labor, and I will hold my present legal relation for your good. In view of this case, I remarked, "Is that excellent man guilty of sin, for holding that slave ? Ought he not to be commended and honored by the wise and the good ? And yet the system which forces him into such a position, is one which all good men should condemn."

Now, I ask my readers, if there is any glaring inconsistency or palpable contradiction, in this view of the *system* of slavery, and *particular cases* of slaveholding ? If I was accustomed to say severe things, or deal in personalities, I should be strongly tempted to open my battery, and give to my opponent a scorching rebuke, for the injustice he has done me in his last communication. But I am thankful that I possess some power of self-control, and I mean to exhibit it on this occasion. I cannot omit to say, however, that I regret exceedingly the course which he has seen fit to adopt. He has attempted to convict me of inconsistency and contradiction, and make me

an object of ridicule, by means which I feel quite sure I should not have adopted in reference to him.

The quotations he has given, are a word here, and a phrase there, *taken from the connection in which they stand*, and so jumbled together to effect the object he had in view, that they would prove me, if received in the manner he intended they should be, not only destitute of logic, but of common sense. "Meridionus" did not reflect in how ridiculous a light I could place him by adopting the method he has pursued. All I ask is, that what I have said shall be taken in the *connection in which it stands, and be fairly and honestly interpreted*, and then if it is pronounced inconclusive, or irrelevant, or contradictory, I will not complain. But it is not right to place what I have said of the *system* of slavery in juxtaposition with what I have said of *particular individuals*, who feel, and lament the bitter evils that cluster around it, and are sighing for deliverance from their burdens, and then raise a shout of triumph as if I had fallen into irreconcilable contradictions. Such a course may suit those, who are striving for the victory, but will not, I think, be sanctioned by honest and earnest inquirers after truth.

A word more in close. I have a strong desire that Christian brethren at the South, will look at this great subject divested of those biasses and prejudices which have resulted from what they suppose to be an improper interference by brethren at the North, with their domestic rights and privileges. That many things have been said and done without the exercise of that wisdom which is profitable to direct, I do most freely admit. I have no hesitation in saying farther, that there are men who have made themselves

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prominent in denouncing slave-holding *in all possible circumstances*, who possess as little of the confidence of Northern, as they do of Southern Christians. The mass of good people at the North have but little respect for their judgment, and give no countenance to their vituperation and indiscriminate denunciation. I need not say that I refer to the Garrison school of abolitionists. AS A BODY, I believe they are the worst enemies of the slaves, and would do twice as much to secure their own aggrandizement and a personal triumph, as they would to burst the bands of the enslaved. Their unmeasured abuse and railing accusations are hurled at Christians at the North who will not listen to their teaching, and submit to their dictation, with as much bitterness as they are poured upon the heads of the most determined defenders of slavery. With large professions of philanthropy and benevolence, I fear the mass of them have yet to learn the first principles of true Christian charity and the gospel method of doing good. They have yet to learn that there is no argument in multiplying epithets of abuse, and that the meekness of Christ is more powerful in reproofing wrong-doers, than the anathemas they have been accustomed to thunder against those, whom they profess to be anxious to reform. But they have had their day, and will soon pass into the obscurity to which their talents and moral worth naturally consign them. There is, however, a very large class at the North, and their number is constantly augmenting, of an entirely different character, who are the uncompromising enemies of slavery. They look upon the system as mischievous in all its workings; bad for the slave, bad for the master, and bad for the country at large. They de-

sire their brethren at the South, in concert with their fellow-citizens, to adopt a course of measures which shall, in a reasonable time, subvert the system, and save them and their children from those evils which naturally and necessarily cluster around it. They have no desire to interfere, or meddle with things which do not belong to them. All they ask, or desire is, that something shall be done adequate to the great emergency which slavery has brought upon the country. Surely, our Southern brethren will not say this is harsh, or officious, or unreasonable. Let them seek direction of Him, "who is wise in counsel and mighty in working," and be willing to do what His Spirit and Word shall dictate, and obstacles which now seem insurmountable will vanish away, and the captives will be set free, and a jubilee will be proclaimed, and our country be in truth, what it has long been in song,

"The land of the free,  
And the home of the brave."

Such a glorious consummation, I am sure, our Southern brethren would hail with an ecstasy of joy. O, may it speedily come; and we will at the North unite with our brethren at the South in adoring that mercy and grace which has brought us so great a deliverance.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE N. Y. EVANGELIST.

[DR. PARKER.]

REPLY TO THE CORRESPONDENT.

MR. EDITOR:—The “Correspondent” thinks he can show that his “contradictions are not *so numerous or palpable*,” as I would have my readers believe. Why did he not, in making this concession, tell us how much *less numerous* they are, and how far they are wanting in *palpableness*. He then speaks of there being no inconsistency between his holding that the system of slavery is a bad thing, and his maintaining that the slave-holder may be a good man. This was not one of the points of contradiction alleged; on the contrary, I entirely agree with him thus far. But what does he mean by the following? Speaking of my last article, he says:

“The quotations he has given, are a word here, and a word there, *taken from the connection in which they stand*, and so jumbled together, to effect the object he had in view, that they would prove me, if received, in the manner in which he intended they should be, not only destitute of logic, but of common sense.” This is a most extraordinary declaration. You would think that the Correspondent would bring forward *one* clear instance of my thus misrepresenting him. Why did he not? Because he knows well that I have not, in a single case, quoted him in a way to prevent him being fairly and honestly interpreted. When he speaks of slaveholders imbruting the minds of the enslaved, and of

their not allowing the children of slaves to obey their own parents, he is professedly pointing out the things that are *inseparable* from slave-holding—things of which slave-holders are “*uniformly*” guilty. It is not my fault that his logic and common sense do not appear to good advantage. I challenge any fair minded man to go back and read the quotations of the Correspondent’s contradictions, without perceiving that they are made with the most perfect fairness. He represents *slave-holding*—not the system merely, but slave-holding, wherever it exists, “as *intrinsically* wrong”—“as to be denounced, as robbing men of their inalienable rights,” &c., &c. That he has also spoken of *the system* of slavery as a sin *per se*, is very true. But how does that prove that he has not elsewhere made all those strong statements about slave-holders?

I care nothing, however, about the precise *number* or *palpableness* of his contradictions. They doubtless all grow out of one vain endeavor. To maintain some of his mistaken positions, the Correspondent must play into the hands of the abolitionists, technically so called, by maintaining that the holding of a slave *voluntarily*, is a crime,—that the slave-holder, just like the robber, the murderer and the drunkard, ought to be called on to repent: Then he wishes to say that he does not hold that slavery is a sin *per se*—that he is no Garrison man. Now how does he differ from the Garrison school? Why in this way. The Garrison man says, The slaveholder is a robber and a man-stealer, and as such he ought to be treated like any other man guilty of the same crimes. That ministers of the gospel and pious elders, who hold slaves, are “Rev. Robbers and pious thieves,” and



deserve to be put in the penitentiary. The Correspondent seems to agree with them entirely, with regard to *the sin*, but in courtesy he would talk to slave-holders as his "Christian brethren at the South." He and the Garrison men agree with respect to the *guilt* of slave-holding. They only differ about the *punishment*. The Garrison men would treat the criminals as they deserve; the Correspondent would shield them from deserved punishment. Does the Correspondent protest again that he makes exceptions in favor of those who are *involuntarily* holding slaves? So do the Garrison school. They allow a man time to carry home a stolen article. If their doctrines are right, their notions of deserved punishment are right also.

The Correspondent says, he resolved to bring me to the defence of my position. Indeed! Has he forgotten that I have already answered his assertions, in which he charges on every voluntary slave-holder the guilt of *imbruting* the mind of his slaves—preventing children from obeying their parents—withholding what is justly their due, &c., &c.? I cannot, of course, prove a negative—but I fearlessly declare that these statements are as gratuitous and calumnious, as it would be in me to say of the Correspondent, that he treats his domestic servants in an equally cruel and fraudulent manner. How can I answer such calumnies, but to deny them, and to warn my Southern brethren against being deceived by terms of respect, uttered with one breath, when the previous one had just characterized them as "imbruting the minds of their slaves," and robbing them "of their inalienable rights."

If the Correspondent thinks he can prove that the

holding of a man in involuntary bondage is wicked, why does he not do it? Why is he forever quoting somebody's opinion? What has that to do with the subject? Why talk perpetually about the *system* of slavery? Why insist upon it, that if one lawful thing is abolished, then every other lawful thing must be abolished? Why maintain that "slavery is not the parental relation"—that "it is not apprenticeship?" What have such senseless truisms to do with the subject? Why tell the story again about Tom? Why show that the laws of slave-holding States embarrass those who are endeavoring to free their slaves? We have no dispute about that. Why does he not prove that every man who holds a slave (except he be doing his best to emancipate him,) is living in sin? Because it cannot be done.

O. R. MERIDIONUS.

[MR. ROOD.]

REPLY TO "O. R. MERIDIONUS."

MR. EDITOR:—I do not intend in this discussion, to be "frightened from my propriety" by any amount of provocation, or to say things which, on a calm review, I shall have occasion to regret. I shall not characterize the arguments of my opponent as "senseless truisms," but leave our readers to judge of their relevancy and weight. He has doubtless done the best he can in the defence of his positions, and if the Christian community shall decide that he has signally failed in sustaining his side of the question, he is still entitled to a respectful consideration of all the arguments he has urged without an effort on my part to weaken their force by holding them up to ridicule and contempt. I shall not, therefore, imitate Meridionus in his last communication. Nor shall I say anything more in respect to my *alleged* inconsistencies and contradictions. The public care very little about that. What they are interested in, is to know, whether it be true or false, that "*there is not one evil in slavery that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other* LAWFUL RELATIONS." Here is a great, vital question, modifying and changing the views of the civilized world in regard to the *system of slavery* according to the decision which shall be passed upon it. If this be true, the views of the great mass of intelligent, Christian men, of the evils of slavery, are altogether erroneous and

unfounded. As I have before remarked, if I were a slave-holder, and believed this representation, I should make myself quite contented, and let slavery work out its own redemption.

But let me remind my opponent that he is, at least, fifty years behind the age. The dark and dreadful evils of slavery are laid open to public inspection, and influences and instrumentalities are in operation, which must, at length, overthrow this mighty Dagon. The decree has gone forth from the throne of heaven, as I believe, that slavery shall die, and it is vain for any class of men to attempt to sustain the tottering fabric.

Meridionus says, he would warn Southern brethren against being deceived by terms of respect, uttered with one breath, when the previous one had just characterized them as imbruting the minds of their slaves, and robbing them of their inalienable rights." Let me tell him that Southern brethren see and *feel* the evils of slavery, and that his most earnest endeavors will never satisfy them, that it is a system worthy of their countenance and support. Time will reveal who are the *real* friends of the South, and how much brethren there are indebted to those, who proclaim the doctrines of my opponent.

I have in the course of this discussion, exhibited the evils of slavery as "brutalizing the mind, and shrouding the enslaved in ignorance,"—as an "unlawful control which slave-holders exercise over the children of the enslaved,"—as a system which "prevents masters from rendering to their servants that which is just and equal,"—as a "right of property in a human being"—as an "incubus that broods over, and to no inconsiderable extent, paralyzes the ener-

gies of both Church and State"—as an "absolute control of one man over his fellow-men, which God never delegated to him"—and as "bartering away rights" which are personal and inalienable. These positions, I think, have been fully sustained by an appeal to the laws of the slave-holding States, and the full and explicit testimony of ecclesiastical bodies, and the published declarations of such men as Mr. Jefferson, and Monroe, and Wm. Pinkney, and Patrick Henry, and Mr. Swain. My proof in support of my positions, so far as *written* testimony is concerned, has been *derived from the South and from Southern men*, with the exception of an extract from the Rev. Mr. Barnes' Book; "Scriptural Views of Slavery." I most cheerfully submit to the intelligence and judgment of our readers, the points which have been controverted between myself and Meridionus.

In the close of his last communication, he says, "why does not the Correspondent prove that every man who holds a slave, except he be doing his best to emancipate him, is living in sin? Because it cannot be done." This is, in effect, a re-iteration of a previous assertion, to wit: "I assert that there are many hundreds of slave-holders—I mean *voluntary* slave-holders—men who have inherited plantations stocked with slaves, who have no plan of emancipating, but who expect to transmit them to their heirs; and yet they are excellent Christian men, and are not guilty of one of the sins specified." If I have shown, as I have aimed to do, the *wrongfulness of the system of slavery*, I have proved that *voluntary* slave-holders, who have no plan of emancipating, and no desire to emancipate, but continue to transmit their

slaves to their heirs, are guilty of sin in the sight of God and good men. I do not hesitate to make this assertion, and am willing to be held responsible for the proof. Here is a fair field of argument, if "Meridionus" chooses to enter it. I think it can be demonstrated, that such persons furnish palpable proof that they are living in violation of the express and implied commands of God. The younger Edwards says of this class: "You do wrong, exceedingly wrong—you do not as you would that men should do to you. *You commit sin in the sight of God—you daily violate the plain rights of mankind.*" Even John Randolph, singular, eccentric, and reckless as he was, in many respects, seems to have entertained essentially the same view. In his Will, he says: "I, John Randolph, of Roanoke, in the county of Charlotte, do ordain this writing, written with my own hand, this fourth day of May, one thousand eight hundred and nineteen, to be my last Will and Testament, hereby revoking all others whatsoever. I give to my slaves their freedom, *to which my conscience tells me they are justly entitled.*" It was Randolph, too, who administered to the Hon. Edward Everett the following scathing rebuke, in 1820—"Sir, I neither envy the head or the heart of that man from the North, who rises here to defend slavery upon principle." But it may thus be defended, if "*there is not one evil in it, that is not equally inseparable from depraved human nature in other* LAWFUL RELATIONS." Meridionus has signified his willingness to close this discussion, with this position *unsustained* ringing in his ears. SO IT SHALL BE.













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